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*ANNUAL REPORT*

# Bahama Islands

## 1946



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# Contents

	PAGE
<b>PART I : Review of the Years 1940 to 1946 . . . .</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>PART II : CHAPTER I Population . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CHAPTER II Occupations, Wages, Labour Organisation . . . .</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>CHAPTER III Public Finance and Taxation. . .</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>CHAPTER IV Currency and Banking . . . .</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>CHAPTER V Commerce . . . .</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>CHAPTER VI Production . . . .</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>CHAPTER VII Social Services . . . .</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CHAPTER VIII Legislation . . . .</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CHAPTER IX Justice, Police and Prisons . . .</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>CHAPTER X Public Utilities . . . .</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>CHAPTER XI Communications and Public Works</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>CHAPTER XII Development in Research, etc. . .</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>PART III : CHAPTER I Geography and Climate. . . .</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>CHAPTER II History . . . .</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>CHAPTER III Administration . . . .</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>CHAPTER IV Weights and Measures . . . .</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>CHAPTER V Newspapers and Periodicals . . .</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>CHAPTER VI Bibliography . . . .</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Sketch Map . . . .</b>	<b>44</b>

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## PART I

### Review of the years 1940 to 1946

The last Annual General Report for the Colony of the Bahamas was that for the year 1939. The present report is intended to summarise the principal events and local developments during the years 1940 to 1946 when, owing to the War and immediate post-War conditions, no annual reports were issued.

The opening phases of the Second World War had little effect on the economic life of the Colony. Its basic industry of tourism showed a decline in the winter season of 1939-40, but a marked recovery took place in the 1940-41 season. After that, with the entry of the United States into the War in 1941, all tourist traffic ceased until hostilities ended, and the Bahamas moved to a strictly War economy. Events however showed that the Colony actually benefited to an even greater degree by the conditions that arose in the islands as a result of this development.

#### *Arrival of Duke of Windsor.*

A notable event of 1940 was the arrival in the Colony in August of that year of His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor, K.G., as Governor and Commander-in-Chief in succession to the Honourable Sir Charles Dundas, K.C.M.G., O.B.E. His Royal Highness held office until May, 1945, and his administration therefore covered all major war-time developments, including the most critical phases of the submarine war in the Atlantic and Caribbean.

#### *Lease of Sea-plane Base.*

Almost simultaneously with the Duke of Windsor's arrival in August, 1940, came the announcement of the decision taken by His Majesty's Government to lease Naval and Air Bases in certain of the North Atlantic and West Indian Colonies to the Government of the United States as part of a comprehensive scheme of Western Hemisphere defence. This led to the establishment of a United States Naval Air Base on the island of Great Exuma, about 150 miles south of Nassau, and to the stationing there of a small detachment of United States' troops during the War. Since the conclusion of hostilities this Force has been withdrawn and the Base, which is held on a ninety-nine years' lease, has been dismantled.

#### *Construction of Airfields.*

The establishment of the Exuma Base had little effect on conditions in the Colony generally, apart from affording more opportunities for employment to the people of that remote settlement. In May, 1942, however, an operation of much greater consequence commenced when the American firm of Pleasantville contractors undertook the work of

expanding Oakes Airfield and the construction of Windsor Field as a project of the Imperial and the United States Governments to serve certain important military purposes during the War. As a result the island of New Providence acquired a new war-time prominence as a school for an Operational Training Unit of the Royal Air Force, as a Staging Post on the Trans-Atlantic Ferry Service and as a base for ocean patrol and air-sea rescue work during the submarine campaign in the West Atlantic and Caribbean waters.

The construction of the two airfields provided steady employment and training for local labour of all grades over a period of some nineteen months from May, 1942, to November, 1943. The average number of men employed throughout the work was approximately 2,400 and the amount earned by Bahamians on the payroll was £629,978, while the purchases of material and supplies from local merchants and their services amounted to £247,265. In his speech at the opening of the Legislature on the 30th of November, 1943, His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor said that the contractors had actually spent £1,113,059 in the Colony and that in addition to this purely material gain the project had indirectly operated as a great vocational training centre. He felt that the Colony had been indeed fortunate in having been chosen to provide sites for two magnificent airfields which were playing a practical part in the war effort and which would be a means, after the War, of linking the Bahamas with the outside world. Events are fulfilling His Royal Highness' forecast, and with Oakes Field in operation as a long distance as well as terminal civil airport, the rapid increase that has taken place in traffic, particularly in transit, indicates the future importance of Nassau as an air link between the two great land masses of the North and South American Continents as well as between the United Kingdom and the West Indies.

#### *Arrival of Royal Air Force.*

The completion of the two airfields in 1943 resulted in a large number of airmen being stationed in New Providence, of whom the majority were undergoing training in the Operational Training Unit at Oakes Field. The O.T.U. continued training until its departure to the United Kingdom after the cessation of the War in the Far East. With the subsequent closing of the R.A.F. Transport Command Staging Post in September, 1946, the war-time association of the Royal Air Force with the Bahamas came to an end.

#### *Garrison.*

A company of British troops, the Cameron Highlanders, arrived early in 1942 to form a regular garrison, the first to be stationed in the Colony since 1891. They were relieved later in the year by Canadian troops, The Veterans Guard, who were subsequently relieved by a company of the Pictou Highlanders of Canada. These troops remained until after the conclusion of hostilities and were finally withdrawn in March, 1946.

In 1942 a whole-time local Defence Force, designated the Bahamas Defence Force, was formed. The cost of this Force was mainly borne by the Imperial Government.

Another body known as the Bahamas Volunteers which had been raised for local defence at the outbreak of War, became the Bahamas Volunteers (Home Guard) and continued to be employed and maintained at the expense of the Colonial Government.

A further body of Bahamian troops was raised to act as auxiliaries to the Royal Air Force. This body, known as the Bahamas Air Service Squadron, was stationed at Oakes Field.

From the commencement of hostilities individual Bahamians had been going overseas to join the Forces, and in 1944 the Bahamas Defence Battalion (formerly the Bahamas Defence Force) commenced training a contingent for overseas service as part of the North Caribbean Regiment. The men left the Colony to complete their training and proceed on active service in 1944. The contingent returned in January, 1946, after service in the Mediterranean and Near East, when it was disbanded.

The total number of Bahamians employed in these Forces, including certain civilian personnel employed by the United States Engineers' Department and the Royal Air Force, exceeded 1,000.

In addition to Bahamians serving in the Forces at home or overseas, or on local war projects, over 5,000 were recruited for agricultural work in the United States to assist the war effort in food production. In all, it was estimated that some 8,000 men and women out of a total population of some 70,000 were engaged during the War either in the Services or in war-time undertakings sponsored by the Imperial or United States Government.

#### *Financial Contribution from the Colony.*

The following financial contributions were made by the Bahamas Government during the War :—

War loan raised and lent to His Majesty's Government, free of interest .....	£250,000
Proceeds from sale of War Savings Certificates and Stamps loaned to His Majesty's Government...	£35,000
Contribution towards Imperial Defence.....	£47,000

#### *Voluntary Organisations.*

Much valuable work was done by voluntary organisations. The Bahamas Central Council Branch of the British Red Cross was formed early in the War. The Branch, which formed sewing groups in the Out Islands, sent large quantities of woollen garments, hospital clothing, surgical supplies and children's clothing to England. One of the most important auxiliary services handled by the Bahamas Red Cross was the transmission of postal messages and cables and prisoner-of-war letters. Messages were sent to civilians in occupied countries and hundreds of letters to prisoners-of-war. Enquiries as to the health and

welfare of men in the various Services were also handled. Among the war funds assisted through the agency of the Bahamas Red Cross were His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and St. John Fund, the Lord Mayor of London Air Raid Distress Fund, Mrs. Churchill's Aid to Russia Fund, the Mobile Canteen Fund, the Malta Relief Fund and the Greek Relief Fund. The total remitted to these funds amounted to the sum of £21,000. Since 1945 the Branch, while continuing to send parcels of clothing to England, has undertaken social welfare work in the Bahamas which includes Public Health Nursing and Child Welfare and a subsidised scheme of milk for school children.

The Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, the Bahamas Branch of which was formed in 1900, while functioning separately from the Red Cross, worked indefatigably for the latter organisation during the War, and the officers and workers of the Red Cross were, with few exceptions, also members of the Order.

In March, 1942, the Order opened a permanent canteen for members of the Fighting Forces on the first floor of the Masonic Temple in Bay Street. This proved an invaluable amenity and full use was made of it by the men.

A second canteen was opened in 1942 as a United Services' Canteen by the Duchess of Windsor and a number of ladies who volunteered to help. A generous donation was received from Lord Nuffield as well as substantial amounts from local subscribers, including Americans resident in Nassau. Everything possible was done to provide recreation and comfortable surroundings for members of the Forces.

The Bahamas War Committee was appointed by the Governor on the 2nd of July, 1940, with the Honourable A. K. Solomon, C.B.E., K.C., as chairman, for the purpose of raising funds for contribution to the war effort since the Colony was not in a position to supply manpower or materials in any appreciable quantity.

As the result of public appeals, entertainments and the selling and raffling of articles contributed by the public, the Committee was able to remit the following contributions to the United Kingdom :—

For purchase of war planes .....	£26,500
Towards purchase of tanks.....	£250
Memorial Ward of the Malta Hospital.....	£1,079 9s. 3d.

A silver nickel plaque was awarded by the Ministry of Aircraft Production to the Bahamas in recognition of the above contributions towards the purchase of aircraft.

The Committee, in addition to the above contributions, provided clothing for twenty munition workers recruited for training in the United Kingdom, paid the passages of a number of persons proceeding from the Bahamas to enlist in Canada and made allowances at Christmas and during leave in the United Kingdom to persons from the Bahamas serving with His Majesty's Forces.

One of the most popular War Funds for which local appeal was conducted in the Bahamas was the King George's Fund for Sailors.

The Committee responsible for the appeal, under the chairmanship of the Honourable H. A. McKinney, M.E.C., succeeded in raising a total of £20,000 in aid of the Fund.

The War Materials Committee was formed in June, 1940, on the initiative of Mr. Etienne Dupuch, who became its chairman. This Committee had as its primary object the sending of vital war material to Britain. As a result of its efforts the Committee was successful in salvaging almost £90,000 worth of material from waste. Of this some £20,000 worth was given free to military workshops in the islands or sold to local industry, while £61,643 worth was sent to Britain as a gift from the people of the Colony. Twenty shipments were sent to Britain during the War, and all got through. The material sent included metal of all grades prepared according to specifications of the Ministry of Supply for smelting on arrival, medical and surgical equipment, field glasses and telescopes, compasses, firearms and cartridges to help arm Britain's Home Guard ; wool, sisal, lignum vitae, and other local products ; canned tomatoes, pineapples, guava marmalade, honey, specially prepared for submarine crews, and numerous other canned goods. In addition to assisting the war effort overseas, the Committee did much to provide local employment and to assist industry. Since the conclusion of hostilities it has initiated an Aid for Britain campaign and continues to send large quantities of canned goods to help towards relieving the food shortage in the United Kingdom.

#### *V.E. Day Celebrations, 1945.*

On Tuesday, the 8th of May, Nassau was gaily decorated with flags of the United Nations flying from business premises and private houses. On the Prime Minister's announcement of the unconditional surrender of the German Forces, a salvo of twelve rounds was fired from Government House. This was followed immediately by the ringing of bells from the churches all over New Providence. At 10.30 a.m. public offices and business places closed for two days. At 12.0 noon a large crowd assembled at the Library Green to attend a thanksgiving service conducted by the Lord Bishop of Nassau. Present were His Excellency the Acting Governor, the Honourable D. G. Stewart, and many officials. Services were also held at 6.0 p.m. in the Cathedral and other churches.

On Sunday, the 13th of May, a special Victory Parade was held and the Acting Governor took the salute on a specially built saluting base opposite Rawson Square. Afterwards wreaths were laid on the Cenotaph by the Acting Governor, the Chief Justice, the President of the Legislative Council, the Speaker of the House of Assembly and the Officer Commanding Troops in the Bahamas. A thanksgiving service was held at 11.0 a.m. at the Cathedral.

#### *V.J. Day Celebrations, 1945.*

Immediately after the Prime Minister had announced the surrender of Japan on Tuesday, the 14th of August, at 7 p.m. a salvo was fired

from the guns at Government House and the church bells pealed. The sirens were sounded. Lights were turned on in many houses and the front of Government House, the Cathedral tower and Water Tower on Fort Fincastle Hill were flood-lit by the Electrical Department. The display of bunting was lavish. From the balcony of the Public buildings hung three large Union Jacks with the Bahamas Badge and flags of all the Allied Nations were displayed over the entrance to Rawson Square. The flagstaff, Fort Charlotte and Fort Fincastle were decked with flags—also hotels and other buildings, including the Royal Nassau Sailing Club and the Nassau Yacht Club, docks and other places along the water front and many vessels in the harbour. Thanksgiving services were held in all the churches.

Apart from war-time developments and connected incidents, of which an outline has already been given, few outstanding events took place during the years under review.

### *Legislation.*

The term of office of the House of Assembly expired in May, 1942. The House was dissolved and a General Election followed. The new House met on the 1st of September, 1942, and remained in session until the end of the War.

The following were the principal items of legislation passed by the Legislature during 1940–46. In 1940 legislation was enacted, implementing the agreement reached with the United States for the establishment of an Air Base at Exuma. In 1943 the first Trades Unions Act was placed on the Statute Book. This Act embodied the laws relating to Trade Unions on the lines of the then existing English legislation. Excluded from its scope, however, were domestic servants and workmen engaged in agricultural or horticultural undertakings. In the same year for the first time provision was made for a system of Workmen's Compensation for injuries suffered in the course of their employment.

The Venereal Diseases Act, 1945, provided for compulsory treatment of all persons suffering, or suspecting that they are suffering, from any of these diseases in a communicable form and also for the compulsory medical examination of all persons committed to prison or to an industrial school. The Act applies to New Providence, but may be extended by Order in Council to any other part of the Colony.

In 1946, the Labour Board Act was passed. This provided for the appointment of a Board to enquire into labour disputes with a view to conciliation. Provision was also made for the appointment of a Labour Officer, whose duties are defined in the Act and include the investigation of any representations made by employers or workmen, the preparation of cost of living indices and other statistics relating to labour conditions, and any other duties that may be prescribed by the Board from time to time.

An important political event of 1946 was the passage by the Legislature, towards the end of the session, of an Act to extend to the Out Island constituencies the system of voting by secret ballot in elections

to the House of Assembly. The system of voting by ballot had been introduced in New Providence in 1939 and now applies to the whole Colony, replacing the former system of open voting.

#### *Riots.*

Rioting for the first time in fifty years occurred in Nassau on the 1st of June, 1942. The cause was dissatisfaction with the rate of pay of local unskilled labour on the airfield then under construction in New Providence. Armed force had to be used to suppress the outbreak, but there were, fortunately, only two fatalities. The incident formed the subject of an enquiry by a Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Alison Russell, K.C.

#### *Fire.*

A serious fire occurred in the business section of Nassau on the morning of the 28th of June, 1942, destroying many buildings, including the Headquarters of the Bahamas Branch of the British Red Cross. In October of the same year a hurricane was experienced that caused extensive damage in New Providence and some of the Out Islands.

#### *Columbus Day.*

The 450th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Columbus was commemorated by a special stamp issue on the 12th of October, 1942.

#### *Tragic Occurrence.*

The whole community was shocked by the brutal murder of Sir Harry Oakes, Baronet, at his residence, "Westbourne," on the night of 7th-8th July, 1943. The mystery surrounding this crime has never been unravelled. Sir Harry Oakes, whose public spiritedness did much to enrich the Colony, took a prominent part in all its affairs and was a Member of the Legislative Council.

#### *Change of Colonial Secretary.*

Mr. W. L. Heape, C.M.G., Colonial Secretary, was promoted as Colonial Secretary of British Guiana early in 1944, and was succeeded by Mr. D. G. Stewart.

#### *Visit of Parliamentary Delegation.*

In March, 1944, a Delegation consisting of four Members of the House of Commons paid a visit to the Colony as representatives of the United Kingdom Branch of the Empire Parliamentary Association. The delegates were Captain (now Sir) Peter Macdonald, M.P., Chairman, Conservative, Captain M. D. Gammons, M.P., Conservative, Mr. (now the Right Honourable) John Wilmot, M.P., Labour, and Mr. J. Henderson Stewart, M.P., Liberal National.

#### *Visit from Secretary of State.*

In 1944 the Colony was honoured for the first time in its history by a personal visit from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right

Honourable Oliver Stanley, M.P. Colonel Stanley arrived at Oakes Field on the evening of Sunday, 31st December, 1944, and left on Wednesday, the 3rd of January, 1945. During his stay, in addition to visiting local institutions, Colonel Stanley had several interviews with leading members of the community on current affairs, addressed both Houses of the Legislature and broadcast a speech to the people of the Colony.

#### *Change of Governor.*

His Royal Highness the Duke of Windsor relinquished office as Governor in May, 1945, and was succeeded by the present Governor, now Sir William Murphy, K.C.M.G., who assumed office in July of that year.

#### *Change of Chief Justice.*

Sir Oscar Daly, Kt., K.C., M.B.E., retired from the office of Chief Justice in September, 1945, and was succeeded by Mr. O. L. Bancroft, K.C., previously Attorney General.

#### *Hurricanes.*

On 14th-15th October, 1945, a severe hurricane passed over some of the Southern Out Islands. The islands of Mayaguana, the Crooked Island group, and the southern part of Andros suffered much damage to boats, houses and crops. A second hurricane struck Governor's Harbour and the central area of Eleuthera in October of the same year and caused considerable local damage.

#### *Visits of His Majesty's Ships.*

Formal visits of His Majesty's ships, discontinued during the War, were resumed when H.M.S. *Birmingham*, flag-ship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron, paid a visit to the Colony in April, 1946, with Rear Admiral A. E. M. B. Cunninghame Grahame, C.B.E., in command. H.M.S. *Wear*, commanded by Lt.-Commander S. Rule, R.N.V.R., paid two visits to the Colony during the year, in May and June, and on the second occasion was placed at the disposal of His Excellency the Governor for a tour of the Out Islands, during which the islands of Andros, Abaco, Grand Bahama, Bimini, Cat Cay and the Berry Islands were visited. H.M.S. *Sheffield*, of the America and West Indies Squadron, commanded by Captain K. G. Harkness, D.S.C., R.N., visited Nassau in September, 1946.

## PART II

### Chapter I : Population

The estimated population for the whole Colony on the 31st of December, 1946, was 80,639, made up of 39,721 males and 40,918 females. This shows a substantial increase in population over previous years, and may be compared with totals of 72,948 for 1945, 69,991 for 1944 and 68,846 in 1943.

During this period the male population has increased at nearly twice the rate of female population, there being 40,918 females in 1946 as against 36,722 in 1943, an increase of 4,196, whereas the male population in 1946 was 39,721, as against 32,124 in 1943, an increase of 7,597.

#### *Births.*

There were 2,323 births in the Colony during the year, or 33.7 per 1,000 based on the census figures, 1943.

#### *Deaths.*

There were 1,117 deaths in the Colony during the year, or 16.2 per 1,000 based on the census figures, 1943.

#### *Marriages.*

There were 531 marriages in the Colony during the year. The marriages were performed by Marriage Officers of the following denominations :—

Anglican .....	89
Roman Catholic .....	50
Methodist .....	63
Baptist .....	262
Others .....	67

#### *Infantile Mortality.*

There were 209 deaths of children under one year, or 94.6 per 1,000 living births.

## Chapter II : Occupations, Wages, Labour Organisation

### INDUSTRIES

The principal industries of the Colony are those concerned with agricultural and marine pursuits and those engaged therein are not wage-earners proper, and seasonal industries provide what may be best described as casual employment.

Owing to the scarcity of material, activities in the building and allied trades were retarded to some extent and, in consequence, continuous employment of skilled and unskilled labour was not at a peak as was anticipated.

The tomato industry, which exports fruit to the United States and Canada, did not meet with the success of former years owing to poor prices, but nevertheless provided employment for a large number of men and women. The bumper tourist season also was the means of providing employment for a large number of hotel employees.

The sponge industry is a thing of the past unless and until the sponge beds recover from the marine disease that devastated them in 1939. The sisal industry did not show results commensurate with former years. Crawfishing provided lucrative employment for a considerable number of seamen during the fishing season. The lucrative industries of native straw-work and shell-work continued in full operation as also did the lumber industry at Grand Bahama.

On certain of the Out Islands major developments have been undertaken which have increased the number of regular wage-earners.

The recruitment of Bahamians for agricultural work in the United States provided employment for some 5,000 unskilled labourers during the year, consequently a serious problem of general unemployment did not arise.

The following table shows approximately labour as utilised in the various industries and occupations :—

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Unskilled Labourers .....	1,800	400	2,200
Semi-skilled Labourers .....	1,600	200	1,800
Carpenters .....	600		600
Masons .....	300		300
Painters .....	300		300
Mechanics .....	120		120
Fishermen .....	400		400
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,120</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>5,720</b>

A substantial additional number of unskilled labourers, male and female, obtain casual employment in seasonal occupations or are engaged in peasant farming.

#### WAGES

In certain industries wages are regulated by Orders in Council made under The Minimum Wage Act of 1936, but the increased cost of living in the Colony, which is very high—the index being the highest in the West Indies—has accelerated the increase of wages far and beyond the minimum in every employment. For example, the unskilled labourer's daily wage of 2/- just over a decade ago shows a very marked increase to 8/- to 10/- per day.

The following range of wages in the various occupations, trades and enterprises for an 8-hour day (overtime  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times) is based on the ability of the individual worker :—

	<i>Per Diem</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Unskilled Labourers .....	8/- to 10/-	2/6 to 4/-
Semi-skilled Labourers .....	12/- to 16/-	8/- to 10/-
Craftswomen (Shell-work) .....	-	10/- to 16/-
"      (Straw-work) .....		6/- to 12/-
Carpenters .....	20/- to 40/-	
Masons .....	20/- to 40/-	
Painters .....	20/- to 30/-	
Mechanics .....	20/- to 35/-	

In not a few instances employment of both skilled and unskilled labour is not continuous, and unskilled male labourers often receive 5/- to 8/- per day for casual employment. Cooks and housemaids and general domestic help are paid from 12/- to 40/- per week according to hours of employment and arrangement with employers.

#### *Cost of Living.*

The cost of living in New Providence is extremely high. During the winter season the tariff in first-class hotels varies from £4 5s. to £10 per day (inclusive) and in the smaller hotels from £1 15s. to £4 per day (inclusive). During the period May to November, rooms may be obtained in the smaller hotels for approximately £1 5s. per day. A furnished house costs from about £360 to £600 a year. It is estimated that, to live in New Providence in reasonable comfort, it would cost a man, excluding rent, if single £600 a year, if married without children £1,000 a year and if married with two children £1,200 a year. In the Out Islands there are a few boarding houses, but suitable bungalows would be difficult to obtain.

The labourer's staple articles of diet are flour, fish, hominy, meal, sugar, and occasionally meat, the cost of these being greatly enhanced by the prevailing high prices. He can obtain lodging for about 8/- or 10/- per week compared with 4/- per week in 1936. He is saved the cost of educating his children or providing medical treatment as both these are furnished by the Government without cost to him.

#### LEGISLATION

The Labour Board Act, which was passed during the year, provided for the appointment of a Labour Board and a Labour Officer.

#### *Trade Unions.*

There are only two Trade Unions in the Colony, namely, the Bahamas Trades and Labour Union and the Bahamas Taxi-Cab Union, both of which were organised in New Providence during the year under review and were duly registered under the provisions of the Trade Unions Act.

*Labour Disputes.*

The only labour dispute during the year was occasioned by a refusal of stevedores to unload ships for a basic wage of 1/6 per hour. The dispute was resolved within 24 hours by compromise and the question of wages for this occupation was referred to a Wages Board appointed by the Governor whose recommendation for an increase in wages was approved and fixed under the Stevedores' Minimum Wage Order 1946.

*Labour Office.*

There is no permanent Labour Department under the Public Establishment of the Colony, but a temporary office has been in existence since 1943 to organise and supervise the recruitment of labourers for agricultural work in the United States and to operate an accounting system in respect of compulsory deductions from workers' earnings for the support of their dependents. An idea of the scope of the work involved may be obtained from the fact that wage deductions in 1946 totalled \$1,114,892.65.

The staff of the Labour Office consists of a Labour Officer and 12 temporary clerks, including an accountant, cashier, identification clerk and an employment clerk.

## Chapter III : Public Finance and Taxation

The totals of revenue and expenditure for the last five years are as follows :—

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	£	£
1942 .....	497,173	457,281
1943 .....	614,245	544,103
1944 .....	671,397	625,744
1945 .....	607,972	704,504
1946 .....	823,604	839,292
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£3,214,391	£3,170,924
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The actual excess of revenue over expenditure for this period was £43,467.

The authorised Public Debt on the 31st of December, 1946, amounted to £245,000, which sum represented a loan of £150,000 raised by sale of debentures issued under the Hotel Loan Act, 1924, £35,000 raised in November, 1936, for installing a new Telephone System, £25,000 in respect of an additional Telephone Loan 1937, and £35,000 for new electrical plant raised in 1937. All these loans were raised locally. Provision is made for the redemption of these loans by annual contributions from the revenue to Sinking Funds, which on the 31st of December, 1946, stood as follows (market value of the securities) :—

Hotel Loan	1924	Redemption Fund .....	£91,540
Telephone Loan	1937	„ „ .....	26,793
Telephone Loan	1937	„ „ .....	14,497
Electricity Loan	1937	„ „ .....	20,227

Total held for repayment    £153,057

The uncovered debt is thus £91,943 at the 31st of December, 1946.

The chief liquid assets of the Colony consist of surplus Funds Investments in England in Trustee Securities bearing interest at approximately 2½ per cent, and amounting at the end of the financial year 1946, to £105,874 market value, cash (Local and Crown Agents) £295,466 together with a loan of £250,000 (free of interest) to His Majesty's Government. Other principal assets are represented by a loan to the Waterloo Hotel Co., of £150,000, the Golf Course Fund £32,806, and the Government Property (P.W.D.) Fund £26,362. Advances recoverable of £142,567 was offset by a liability of £122,324 in deposits. The uninvested cash liability on account of the P.O.S.B. stood at £4,187 on the 31st of December, while other liabilities consisted of Bahamas War Savings Certificates and Stamps £7,290 and an amount of £71,100 held for repayment of War Loan Debentures which had not yet been presented for redemption.

Apart from Real Property Tax, and a Probate Duty of 2 per cent on personalty, there is no direct taxation in the Colony. The revenue is mainly derived from the following sources :—

	1946	1945	1944
	£	£	£
Customs .....	483,804	319,177	320,584
Port, wharf and harbour dues .....	31,398	30,034	25,791
Licences and internal revenue .....	22,143	16,395	15,814
Real Property Tax .....	13,929	9,754	11,362
Fees of Court or office, etc. ....	68,793	59,704	119,508
Post Office Revenue .....	54,304	45,592	40,616
Interest.....	6,754	7,545	6,171
Electric Power Receipts .....	73,856	60,937	66,344
Telegraphs and Telephones .....	56,233	49,813	55,753
Civil Airport Fees .....	1,829	—	—

There are no excise duties in the Colony. Stamp duties are imposed on instruments used in civil proceedings in the Supreme Court or in commercial or other transactions, and are based on the value of the transaction. The Stamp Amendment Act 1936 levies a tax of 2d. on all cheques.

Expenditure under main heads for the years 1944-46 was :—

Head	1946	1945	1944
	£	£	£
1. Public Debit .....	23,378	25,430	21,758
2. Pensions and Gratuities .....	19,022	17,385	12,684

<i>Head</i>	1946	1945	1944
	£	£	£
3. Legislative Council .....	657	488	546
4. House of Assembly .....	3,779	3,233	2,764
5. Governor and Staff .....	4,421	4,265	4,279
6. Secretariat .....	3,015	2,665	2,583
7. Treasury Department .....	2,725	2,641	2,544
8. Customs Department .....	8,929	14,316	16,035
8A. Immigration Department .....	917	566	553
9. Judicial .....	3,609	4,388	3,015
10. Legal Department .....	1,860	1,869	1,678
11. Registrar General .....	1,757	2,329	2,185
12. Police Department .....	44,037	39,023	36,767
12A. Police Dept. Non-recurrent.....	1,059	—	1,915
13. Fire Department .....	3,332	1,307	1,846
13A. Fire Dept. Non-recurrent .....	—	—	171
14. Prison Department .....	15,156	13,428	13,556
14A. Prison Dept. Non-recurrent .....	3,651	261	—
15. Audit Department .....	1,478	1,389	1,291
16. Post Office .....	46,059	43,827	42,467
16A. Post Office, Non-recurrent .....	93	—	—
17. Telecommunications Dept. ....	40,317	34,254	33,440
17A. Telecommunications, Non-recur- rent .....	8,727	1,199	2,196
18. Libraries .....	1,571	1,494	1,509
19. Education .....	40,070	35,982	32,837
19A. Education, Non-recurrent .....	11,798	4,248	1,244
20. Port and Marine .....	24,802	27,788	25,845
20A. Port and Marine, Non-recurrent ..	7,419	518	—
21. Medical Department .....	57,723	47,924	43,226
21A. Medical Dept., Non-recurrent ...	5,138	3,054	—
22. General Clerical Staff .....	25,087	19,589	16,720
23. Public Works Department .....	9,364	8,514	7,478
24. Public Works Recurrent New Providence .....	29,724	26,794	24,420
25. Public Works Recurrent Out Islands .....	7,962	7,548	8,430
26. Public Works Non-recurrent New Providence .....	10,332	19,181	9,827
27. Public Works Non-recurrent Out Islands .....	5,888	20,020	7,766
28. Agricultural and Marine Products Board .....	10,272	12,147	15,950
28A. Agricultural and Marine Products Board, Non-recurrent .....	—	4,723	319
29. Development Board .....	34,732	17,061	9,057
30. Electrical Department .....	39,704	41,356	43,596
30A. Electrical Dept., Non-recurrent ...	7,009	23,016	2,353

<i>Head</i>	1946	1945	1944
	£	£	£
31. Labour Office .....	4,321	—	—
Ice Plant .....	—	—	4,959
Ice Plant Non-recurrent .....	—	—	26
32. Out Island Department .....	12,687	11,632	10,664
32A. Out Island Dept., Non-recurrent .....	17,367	4,047	10,173
33. Water and Sewerage .....	15,345	11,772	11,004
33A. Water and Sewerage, Non-recurrent .....	6,628	17,619	13,339
34. Miscellaneous .....	89,243	92,529	70,159
34A. Miscellaneous, Non-recurrent.....	94,289	6,399	19,642
35. Industrial School .....	5,521	5,388	4,590
War Measures .....	—	19,898	26,359
36. Civil Aviation .....	24,193	—	—

## CUSTOMS TARIFF

The general *ad valorem* duty is 20 per cent plus an Emergency Tax of 5 per cent *ad valorem*. Staple foodstuffs pay a low specific duty and are exempted from Emergency Tax.

Spirits and tobacco are taxed specifically at relatively high rates. Gasoline and oils pay specific duties with an additional sales tax on gasoline.

A sliding tariff is provided for the protection of the Colony's agricultural production, the maximum rate being placed sufficiently high to preclude the importation of any item, produced in sufficient quantity to meet our requirements.

Preferential margins are designed to implement the Ottawa and Anglo-American trade agreements.

Provision is made for the exemption from duty of Government stores, supplies for armed forces, industrial and educational supplies and meritorious awards.

The importation of deleterious and spurious items is prohibited.

## Chapter IV : Currency and Banking

British sterling money is declared to be the money of account under the British Currency Act (Chapter 159). Under the Proclamation of His Majesty in Council of the 17th of October, 1936, however, silver coins of the United Kingdom ceased with effect from the 1st of November, 1936, to be legal tender in the Colony for the payment of an amount exceeding forty shillings.

Local currency consisting of notes of 4/—, 10/—, £1 and £5 denominations are issued by the Bahamas Government Currency Commissioners. A total of £482,800 of these notes was in circulation at the end of the year.

The only bank operating in the Colony at present, apart from the Post Office Savings Bank, is the Nassau Branch of the Royal Bank of Canada.

#### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK

This Bank had deposits amounting to £320,707 for the year ended the 3rd of June, 1946, which was an increase of £14,889 over 1945. There was an increase of 914 in the number of depositors during the year.

Barclays Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) has acquired premises in Nassau and is making preparations to open a Branch in 1947.

## Chapter V : Commerce

### IMPORTS

The Colony depends almost entirely on outside sources of supply for its requirements, and in 1946 total imports amounted to £2,840,576 or approximately £1,000,000 in excess of imports for 1945. The increase in 1946 can be attributed principally to increased prices of imported articles, and importations of machinery and other equipment brought into the Colony by the Oil Companies engaged in oil exploration within the Bahamas. In the latter part of the year importations in preparation for the forthcoming tourist season also contributed in some measure to this increase.

The Colony's foodstuffs were procured mainly from Canada and the United States of America. Flour, cooking fats, butter, frozen meats and milk, condensed and evaporated, were obtained principally from Canada. Corn products, canned and pickled meat, fresh and preserved fruit and vegetables and rice come primarily from the U.S.A. Sugar before the War was obtained mostly from Cuba, but for the year under review was imported from Jamaica. Imports of foodstuffs amounted to £908,715.

The demand for fresh milk, poultry and eggs was met by local production.

Cotton piece goods and wearing apparel came principally from U.S.A., as did also boots and shoes. Woollen piece goods and knit sweaters, etc., that used to be imported in substantial quantities from the United Kingdom in pre-war years, and were a potential source of dollar revenue as these items were sold mostly to American tourists, were unobtainable, in appreciable quantities, during 1946.

Motor-cars and bicycles together with tyres were obtained in very restricted numbers from the United Kingdom and also from the U.S.A. and Canada.

Hardware, paint and oil and building material generally were most difficult to obtain, and importations were far below pressing requirements.

EXPORTS

Total exports amounted to £399,319 or approximately £33,000 below exports for 1945.

The principal countries of destination were Canada, the U.S.A. and Cuba.

Salt valued at £71,742 was an important item and went substantially to Canada. Tomatoes, a moderately remunerative industry, were exported mainly to Canada, while scale fish, crawfish, straw-work and costume jewellery made of small sea-shells went to the United States of America.

Lumber valued at £10,979 was exported to Cuba.

The total value of the Colony's trade during the last five years was as follows :—

	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
	£	£	£	£	£
Imports .....	1,326,463	1,525,624	1,735,899	1,806,019	2,840,576
Exports (excluding specie)	292,777	424,916	338,482	432,202	399,319
	<u>1,619,240</u>	<u>1,950,540</u>	<u>2,074,381</u>	<u>2,238,221</u>	<u>3,239,895</u>

## Chapter VI : Production

The natural resources of the Colony are marine, agricultural and forest products. Except for forest exploitation on the Islands of Abaco, Grand Bahama and Andros production is conducted individually, there being neither factories, plantations nor mines anywhere in the Colony.

Of the products of the Colony, sponge, crawfish, salt, tomatoes, shell, sisal, straw-work, hardwoods and lumber are exported, other commodities are at the present time produced only for local consumption.

No actual distinction exists between cultivation or other forms of production by persons of European and non-European descent. The former are principally engaged in commerce and the latter mainly in production ; but persons of both races may be found engaged in one or the other of these pursuits, and such limited agricultural employment as exists is not restricted entirely to one race.

### AGRICULTURE

Taking into consideration the aftermath of World War No. II, from an agricultural point of view the year may be considered satisfactory. The efforts on the part of the Board of Agriculture to foster and encourage crop growing and stockrearing on the Out Islands were continued.

The large number of farm labourers recruited and sent to the U.S.A., together with the first four months of severe drought at the beginning

of the year, was a great set-back to the early efforts to produce crops sufficient to meet the urgent demand for local foodstuffs. Happily, however, the showers of May and the succeeding months materially changed the outlook and thus bountiful and profitable crops were produced by the persistent cultivators.

The opportunity for adventure and travel afforded by the recruiting of labourers for the U.S.A. drew from the farming community the greater number of the able bodied young farmers, but in spite of this the older men and those of the younger group who remained at home, by their activities, were responsible for the success of the 1946 agricultural efforts.

#### *Food Crops.*

The production of local food crops received greater attention and in consequence there was no necessity for the Government to render any assistance by supplying foodstuffs to any section of the Colony.

#### *Vegetables.*

The growing of such crops as cabbages, beets, carrots, spinach, English peas, Lima beans and okras was carried on throughout the Colony, especially in the places where weather conditions were favourable.

#### *Onions.*

Failure to obtain a sufficient quantity of onion seeds resulted in a decreased acreage of this crop being put under cultivation.

#### *Okras.*

The growing of okras as a new industry continued to attract the attention of many progressive producers, and as a result 632 barrels valued at £4,756 were grown during the season.

#### *Tomatoes.*

As a result of the remunerative prices obtained in 1945 larger areas were planted out and the amount produced was greater than that of the previous year, but the returns showed a very great falling off in prices.

The Board of Agriculture as usual assisted by furnishing seeds, fertiliser, inspection and marketing facilities. One thousand eight hundred acres were set out and 96,000 bushels valued at £68,811 were shipped at an average price of 14/4 per bushel.

#### *Pineapples.*

A steady increase in the expansion of this industry took place and the crop of 1947 is expected to be larger than the previous year's production. Nineteen thousand, two hundred and twenty-four dozen pineapples valued at £4,820 consisting of the Sugar Loaf and Red Spanish varieties were shipped abroad. The remainder of the crop was sold on the local market, the majority of which was canned by the Food for Britain Committee.

*Citrus.*

Efforts directed towards the expansion of this industry were well maintained, and thousands of budded plants were sold to the general public in New Providence and the Out Islands. There is a marked increase in the number of trees planted especially by those who are establishing homes.

The crops reaped during the year showed a marked improvement in size and quality. The market and fruit stores were well supplied with a fine display of native grown fruit during the time of harvest and the prices paid were in most instances good.

*Bananas.*

During the year much attention was directed towards the planting of this important item of food. Several farmers in New Providence secured from Cat Island and Spanish Wells hundreds of plants and planted them on their holdings, and in many instances are reaping good crops at remunerative prices. Apart from these results thousands of bunches were sent to the Nassau Market and Produce Exchange from the Out Islands.

*Sisal.*

Peasant farmers still continued to plant small areas during the year. Prices were good. Three thousand, three hundred and eight cwt. valued at £6,180 resulted from the year's output.

*Sansevieria.*

The bright prospects of this industry during its early stages, becoming a rival to sisal have not been realised and, as a result, the farms established at Andros, Cat Island, Long Island, Exuma and Abaco were abandoned.

*Sericulture.*

Nassau Carribean Silk Co., Ltd. is still experimenting in this industry.

The company has a nursery at Lyford Cay, New Providence and its headquarters at Old Botanical Gardens, East Shirley Street, Nassau. Up to the present it does not appear to attract the peasant farmer as an industry suitable to local requirements. Small plantings were established on Eleuthera and Cat Island.

*Fodder Crops.*

On the whole local peasant farmers are not interested in the growing of any imported fodder crops. Therefore the varieties of Napier and other grasses grown at the Experimental Station were never asked for and thus the efforts directed towards distributing these grasses may be regarded as a failure.

## ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The following table shows the quantity of livestock :—

<i>Livestock</i>	<i>Quantity</i>
Horses .....	2,800
Horned Cattle .....	2,500
Sheep .....	20,000
Goats .....	12,000
Swine .....	6,000
Poultry .....	300,000

The importance of animal husbandry to agricultural development in the Colony has always been stressed.

*Horses.*

The vaccination of horses, mules and asses against sleeping sickness was carried out and there have been no new cases reported.

*Sheep, Goats and Swine.*

An outbreak of mange and screw-worm occurred in Andros and Grand Bahama, but this has now been practically eradicated.

The Agricultural and Marine Products Board periodically furnishes thoroughbred stock to farmers on the Out Islands for the purpose of improving the native breeds.

## FISHERIES

The export of crawfish and scalefish under licences was continued. Rules governing the industry were amended and the season for fishing was changed from 1st October—31st March to 1st October—20th March. The purchasing centres were maintained as usual, and a thorough inspection of all cargoes arriving at Floridian ports was carried out. This inspection at destination was tried for the first time in 1945 and proved very satisfactory.

This industry justifies without a doubt the attention given to it by Government through the Agricultural and Marine Products Board. The value of fish exported during the year amounted to approximately £50,000.

The sponge beds, closed since 1939 on account of a disease occurring amongst the sponges, were opened to fishing on the 20th of October. Exports for November and December amounted to 20 cwt. valued at £2,822. During the period of closure the beds have shown very little improvement and the future outlook for this industry is discouraging. One of the best varieties, namely velvet, has become extinct.

The following are other products exported during the year :—

<i>Produce</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i>
Cascarilla Bark .....	1,181 cwt. ....	£6,632
Hardwoods .....	260 „ .....	75
Shell and Straw Work ...	— .....	33,664
Marine Curios .....	— .....	5,289
Turtle Shell .....	32 „ .....	4,926

## CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

There are no co-operative societies other than fifteen Farmers' Associations on the Islands of Eleuthera and Cat Island. These Associations are assisted by the Board of Agriculture to the extent of advancing seed and fertiliser, etc., in respect of the tomato industry only. The Board markets the crop and deducts their advances from the proceeds of each consignor until the entire indebtedness is liquidated.

## Chapter VII : Social Services

## EDUCATION

Primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of six and fourteen years of age, and is provided at public expense. The total amount expended by the Board of Education during 1946 was £54,666 giving an average cost per pupil on the total roll for the year of £4 8s. 6d.

The Board maintained seventy-five schools, and grants-in-aid were paid to forty-six schools. The total roll was 12,276. In addition to these schools, which are directly under the control of the Board of Education, there are forty-four denominational schools with a total roll of over 2,268 pupils and private schools with over 255 pupils. Owing to the scattered population, this relatively large number of schools is not entirely adequate. A number of children are out of the reach of any school, and in some localities attendance at school entails a certain amount of hardship on young children.

In conformity with the agricultural policy of the Government, prominence has been given in all Board schools to agricultural training. This is becoming an outstanding feature of education in the Bahamas. Sewing lessons for girl pupils are given in most schools, two centres for cooking classes for girls and two of woodwork classes for boys have been established in Nassau. Two teachers were sent to Toronto for a year's training.

The Board employed 144 teachers (principal and assistant) and, in addition, forty-five grant-in-aid teachers. The shortage of qualified teachers within the Colony is proving a great handicap to education. Secondary education leading to the School Certificate is provided for 130 pupils in the Government High School. There are also four schools maintained by several religious bodies which provide secondary education for about 400 pupils. One of these schools satisfies the conditions laid down in the Secondary Education Act and receives assistance from the Government.

In 1946 two scholarships of the annual value of £400 to enable the holders to pursue approved courses of studies at a university within the British Empire were approved.

The British Council has given £1,000 in books to form the nucleus of a schools' circulating library. The Bahamas Branch of the British Red Cross Society subsidises the provision of milk to seven schools.

## HEALTH

The climate of the Colony is most conducive to good health. Pipe-borne, purified water, a drainage and sewerage system, ice plant and cold storage are features of the capital, Nassau.

The city water, ice and milk supply are regularly analysed and a high standard of purity maintained.

Elsewhere in the Colony, protection of wells from contamination is attempted, though boiling of water is the safest method.

*Medical.*

The Medical and Public Health Service is administered by a Health Board, to which the Chief Medical Officer is adviser.

The chief problems in the Bahamas are malnutrition, syphilis and tuberculosis. Infectious and epidemic diseases are singularly infrequent. General diseases are present in average percentages.

The Government spent £36,737 on hospital and allied services, and £25,343 on health, sanitation, etc., in 1946.

The hospital needs of the Colony are centred on the Bahamas General Hospital in Nassau, which has a complement of 308 beds ; there are three full-time resident doctors, a British matron, two British and three Canadian sisters and sixty-one native nurses (fifty-three in training). One hundred and forty-three of all ranks form the staff.

Most of the service is free, there being in addition a private patients' section under private practitioners. In the Out-Patient Department, 17,826 cases were treated and 2,905 admitted to the general, mental and infirmary wards of the Hospital in 1946. There are dental, venereal and gynaecological clinics as well, and the X-ray and Bacteriological Laboratories serve all sections of the Hospital and outside demands.

The average stay in hospital was nine days and ninety-three per cent of beds were constantly occupied, though as many as 321 were accommodated. The cost per patient per day was 7/- (4/- in 1937, 5/7 in 1944). There were 409 births and 244 deaths, the latter being mainly cardio-vascular, gastro-intestinal and respiratory, though a considerable number of malignant cases appeared. Cases came from all parts of the Colony, though largely from Nassau, where the wage-earning population mainly resides.

The Out Islands had four medical officers, centred in areas where local visits can be made. There were eight unqualified practitioners (mostly in missionary activities) at other centres. Ten qualified nurses and ten midwives are also employed in various islands.

The Public Health Nursing Service is under a specially qualified Welfare Nurse, who, with five graduate nurses, supervises three health centres ; they deal with ante-natal, post-natal, infant and child welfare, together with a school service, home visits and the early detection of communicable diseases.

Associated with the Department's activities is a Bahamas Red Cross District Nursing and Welfare Service, under a Welfare Officer and three graduate nurses, doing valuable independent work.

The Industrial School for Boys looks after seventy-one boys as a Government institution.

### *Sanitation.*

(a) The Chief Sanitary Inspector carries out the policies determined by the Health Board. There are seven sanitary inspectors in New Providence. The Out Islands have a local Board of Health, of which the Commissioner is chairman if no District Medical Officer is present.

(b) Chlorinated filtered water is delivered throughout Nassau ; careful bacteriological controls are made. Wherever possible, town supply is installed in houses, otherwise standpipes are provided. Old wells are being gradually eliminated and in any case are not allowed for drinking water. Water-borne sewage is disposed of by the "activated-sludge" process.

(c) Pasteurised milk forms the bulk of the milk supply, raw milk being limited in quantity. Regular tests are made on both.

(d) Meat is inspected by the Chief Sanitary Inspector ; the sale of food in the Public Market is supervised by a full-time officer. Only licensed premises are permitted and all food-handlers are examined medically twice yearly.

(e) Street cleaning and garbage collection is part of the Department's programme ; 5,000 tons were dealt with in 1946.

(f) Hygiene as a whole is good in New Providence. With the increase of population in areas where no proper sanitation is available, every effort is made to prevent the accumulation of rubbish and to ensure the proper disposal of excreta.

(g) Industrial problems do not exist on the scale of most countries, there being no mines or factories.

Mosquito control is a problem of all the islands, though malaria is not so far associated with it. Elimination of breeding places about Nassau, oiling of pools and provision of larvae-devouring fish are being continued with good results, but the problem (together with midge-control) demands a very costly solution by filling in marshy areas, eliminating undergrowth at edges of pools, etc., and spraying from aeroplanes with special solutions, and with powders from power-trucks, etc.

### HOUSING

The rapid extension of the town of Nassau over some years, particularly during the recent War, by the migration of many from the Out Islands for employment in an influx which has remained, has made the housing problem very prominent. Any houses are very costly, scarce and overcrowded. Practically half the population of the Bahamas is now centred in Nassau. Even the better houses are in great demand during the "season" and prices are phenomenal. The poorer houses are simple in construction, with one to three rooms at 4/- per room per

week, and mostly wooden, though every encouragement is given to more permanent construction. The spread has been to the south in areas where there is no water supply and no adequate sanitation, but advice and a certain amount of supervision is given regarding cleanliness and the use of water.

A Town-Planning Commission was appointed during the year and made certain proposals which, if implemented, will go far to improve the conditions both in New Providence and the Out Islands.

### SOCIAL WELFARE

The Health Department controls an infirmary, mental and leper sections in hospitalisation, free of charge. Demands on all but the leper section have increased and plans have been discussed for increasing facilities, mainly for mental patients. Coupled with this, is the necessity for tuberculosis section, the present wards accommodating only a dozen. A survey in 1944-45 by Dr. W. Santon Gilmour, O.B.E., M.B., Ch.B., tuberculosis adviser to the Comptroller of Development and Welfare in the West Indies, emphasised the need for this as a special problem and this is included in future planning. Free medical treatment is the rule of the day. Paupers are brought to and from the Out Islands to the Hospital and £881 was spent on pauper relief during the year.

The Public Health Nursing Service, as mentioned above, gives a variety of free clinics and together with the Red Cross District Nursing Service reaches homes and schools, where the necessity for advice and instruction is obvious. The educative effect, too, is emphasised.

Sports in schools and institutions are encouraged and a variety of games, cricket, football, etc., are becoming popular in many sections of the town and islands.

It will be noted that certain changes occurred during the years of the recent war; considerable migration occurred in the Islands, particularly to Nassau. Increased population which settled in the vicinity has not had the best planning to adapt it in housing, sanitation and water supply. It is significant that no epidemic occurred. Two health centres were added to the District Service by the Duchess of Windsor and have been a boon in dealing with the increased number of cases where advice is required. This was further met by the Red Cross activities.

There have been threats from outside of epidemics, and particularly of poliomyelitis. It was necessary in 1946 to place all persons coming from Florida under quarantine for twelve days, but fortunately no case appeared over the whole period of five months. The recently evacuated R.A.F. hospital was used for this purpose.

Plans for improvements in the Health Service were discussed during the War years, but it was only in 1946 that anything definite could be contemplated. The Legislature has now authorised the raising of a loan for the purpose of constructing a new General Hospital, and a new Mental Hospital, with a tuberculosis section later. Tentative plans

have been considered and 1947 should see the initiation of the scheme. The R.A.F. hospital will be used in the interim while the new hospital is in the process of building.

## Chapter VIII : Legislation

Of the thirty-four Acts passed by the Legislature during the year the following are the most important :—

*The General Assembly Elections Act, 1946*, originated in the House of Assembly by Message from His Excellency the Governor and was finally passed by both Houses of the Legislature after one of the most bitter battles in the political history of this Colony. Formerly the election of Out Island Members to the House of Assembly was controlled by the General Assembly Elections Act and the General Assembly Voters' Act, which provided for open voting. This Act consolidates the existing laws and requires that all elections whenever held in the Colony shall be by secret ballot.

*The Labour Board Act, 1946*, empowers the Governor in Council to appoint a Labour Board to be composed of five members "two of whom shall be members of the House of Assembly not being members of the Executive Council nor holding an office of profit under the Crown." It provides also for the appointment of a Labour Officer and defines his duties.

*The Jury (Amendment) Act, 1946* provides for an increase in fees paid to jurors as follows :—

Civil Cases : from 5/- each case to 10/-.

Special Jury : from 5/- per day or part of a day to 10/-.

The Act further provides that jurors serving on criminal cases shall be paid at the rate of 10/- per day. Prior to the passing of this Act jurors serving on criminal cases were not paid.

*The Mental Treatment Act, 1946* repeals the Lunacy Act, 1937, which was considered inadequate in that a person of unsound mind might not be apprehended except upon information on oath. This proved to be impracticable, and the primary object of this Act is to remedy this defect by vesting authority in a peace officer to apprehend a person of unsound mind if such person appears to such officer to be dangerous to himself or the general public. It also provides for the treatment of voluntary and temporary patients.

*The Telephone Loan Act, 1946*, and the *Electricity Loan Act, 1946* empower the Governor in Council to raise loans of £10,000 and £53,000 respectively either locally or in London by the issue of debentures for the purposes of defraying the expenses in connection with the reconstruction and expansion of the Telephone and Electrical Systems of New Providence.

## Chapter IX : Justice, Police and Prisons

### LOCAL LAW AND COURTS

#### *Law.*

The Law of the Colony is :—

(a) The Common Law of England as it existed at the time of the settlement and subject to the exceptions mentioned in the Declaratory Act (Chapter 7 Statutes, Revised Edition, 1929).

(b) Statutes of the Imperial Parliament specifically applied to the Colony by enactment of the local Legislature.

(c) Statutes of the Colonial Legislature.

#### *Courts.*

There is a Supreme Court of the Colony which sits in Nassau, is presided over by a Chief Justice, and has the jurisdiction of a High Court of Justice in England. An appeal, in civil matters, lies from the Supreme Court to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The Supreme Court sits throughout the year as occasion requires, but ordinary Sessions are held quarterly for the disposal of criminal informations and of civil actions, listed for trial by jury.

The principal Magisterial Court of the Colony is that of the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, who is stationed in Nassau, and appeals from his Court lie to the Supreme Court. Magisterial powers are also exercised by Commissioners in charge of Districts in the Out Islands, and by Justices of the Peace, and appeals from such Courts lie to the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, who goes on circuit from time to time among the Out Islands, to hear such appeals and dispose of cases triable only, in original jurisdiction, by a Circuit Justice. The Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, Commissioners, and, where so empowered, Justices of the Peace, are also responsible for the conduct in court of preliminary enquiries into indictable offences triable by the Supreme Court.

Payment of fines by instalments is permitted in suitable cases, but the necessity seldom arises. The Penal Code provides for placing offenders on probation, and there is one probation officer.

The main types of civil cases are those for money lent, rentals and damages ; while the criminal cases chiefly consist of charges of wounding, burglary, house-breaking, stealing, the use of obscene language, and unruly behaviour.

#### *Prevalence of Crime.*

The following table shows the number of cases dealt with by the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate and in the Supreme Court for the past three years :—

MAGISTRATE'S COURT			SUPREME COURT		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil Cases</i>	<i>Criminal Cases</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil Cases</i>	<i>Criminal Cases</i>
1944	1461	2179	1944	67	55
1945	1674	1733	1945	73	69
1946	1770	1484	1946	89	113

The decreases in criminal cases brought before the Magistrates' Court during the past three years is due primarily to the recruitment of large numbers of workers for employment in agriculture in the United States. The increase in indictable offences reflects a corresponding increase in the number of habitual offenders. In 1946, for the first time on record, the number of criminal cases tried in the Supreme Court exceeded the number of persons accused. It may be observed that the increase in indictable crime has been met by a noticeable increase in the length of the terms of imprisonment awarded by the Court to those with a previous criminal history.

#### *Juvenile Delinquency and Probation Services.*

The fact that most indictable offences are committed by persons of ages averaging from eighteen to twenty-five years manifests the lack of proper services in the Colony to cope with juvenile delinquency. The Juvenile Offenders' Act, under which children and young persons are tried, is antiquated, and more modern legislation is now under consideration.

The Industrial School, to which juvenile offenders are committed, does not appear to serve the purposes for which it is intended, and a general reorganisation of this institution is now engaging the attention of the Government.

#### BAHAMAS POLICE FORCE

The Bahamas Police was established by an Act of Legislature in 1864.

The present authorised establishment of the Force is six officers and 200 other ranks.

The headquarters are in Nassau, a few individual constables only being stationed on the Out Islands from time to time. The Out Islands generally are policed by a force of local and district constables under the Out Island Commissioners.

The Bahamas Police is a semi-military force, there being no Imperial troops or Defence Force in the Colony. It is equipped with rifles and automatic weapons and trained as a rifle company. All ceremonial parades, guards and sentries are provided by the Force.

A band of eighteen instruments is maintained. For civil police duties the Force is organised into Headquarters and street duty divisions

with a separate Criminal Investigation Department. It is equipped with a Motor Transport Section consisting of eleven vehicles and the C.I.D. has a well equipped Photographic and Finger Print Section.

The town area, divided into beats, is constantly and regularly patrolled from four police stations and the rural areas from two sub-stations.

The Force is also the Fire Brigade for New Providence and is equipped with nine motor fire engines, all personnel of the Force being trained as firemen.

The officers of the Force are appointed from the Colonial Police Service and the other ranks are recruited locally from the various Bahama Islands as far as is possible and from Barbados and British Guiana when local recruiting falls short. Individual men from Trinidad and Jamaica, who were living in Nassau, have also been enlisted.

### PRISONS

The main prison in Nassau has accommodation for 117 male and nineteen female prisoners.

There is a prison farm at Fox Hill for first offenders which can accommodate seventy-two male prisoners in four dormitories.

Work has started on a new prison also at Fox Hill, but progress has been slow on account of the difficulty experienced in obtaining steel and other material from England. This prison is intended for occupation by the recidivist or habitual criminal and will have cell accommodation for sixty-four male prisoners, who will be employed in the making of concrete building blocks and cement sewer pipe for the Public Works Department.

Juvenile male prisoners are accommodated at the Industrial School, half a mile distant from the first offenders' prison farm at Fox Hill, until they reach the age of sixteen. A visiting committee is responsible for the control and management of this school and effort is made to teach agriculture and other crafts in conjunction with elementary schooling.

There are small prisons or "lock-ups" on all Out Islands, which are under the supervision of the respective Commissioners. Prisoners sentenced to terms exceeding three months are transferred to Nassau.

The health of prisoners during the year was uniformly good, there have been no epidemics or infectious diseases.

The daily average number of prisoners in the Nassau prisons during 1946 was 198.

## Chapter X : Public Utilities

### ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

The largest supply system in the Colony is in the island of New Providence and is owned and operated by the Bahamas Government.

A supply was first given in 1908 from a small direct current plant in the town of Nassau, driven by gas engines from a producer gas plant.

In 1922 the system was completely reorganised, the old direct current plant being replaced with diesel driven alternators, supplying the system at 2,300 volts high tension and 200 or 115 volts low tension. As this plant was purchased from America the frequency adopted was sixty cycles.

The growth of the system continued rapidly and in 1937 a loan was raised to establish a new power station some two miles outside the town, it being evident that the original power station site could not provide sufficient room for future expansion.

The first installations at the new site were completed in 1939, a small diesel driven alternator being installed for peak load purposes.

This was followed in 1941 with the installation of a 1,100 h.p. supercharged diesel alternator set and a further installation of two similar 1,100 h.p. sets was nearing completion at the end of 1946.

To complete the process of eliminating the old power station three more supercharged diesel alternators of 1,100 h.p. are to be installed in the new power station as soon as delivery of the necessary equipment can be made.

The generating voltage at the new power station is 6,900 volts and all the new high voltage feeders are at this voltage, the high voltage distribution in the town, however, remains at 2,300 volts. It is possible, if development of the eastern and western ends of the Island continues, that it may be necessary to install additional transmission lines at 12,000 volts to provide a suitable supply.

Electricity rates are amongst the lowest in the West Indies and although fuel, labour and material costs continue to rise rapidly no increase in charges have been made since 1944.

Altogether the undertaking has some forty miles of underground high tension and low tension networks and 115 miles of overhead high tension and low tension feeders. The number of consumers connected at the end of 1946 were 4,010, and units generated during the year were 9,713,000.

An extensive programme of expansion and reconstruction is in hand, an important aspect of the latter being the replacement of much of the present overhead system by underground networks. Some twenty years of experience with underground cables has shown that local conditions are not unfavourable to their use. The elimination of as much as possible of the overhead system is thought to be a good investment, against the probably extensive and costly damage, which may be caused by hurricane or similar tropical disturbances experienced in this area.

Several of the Out Islands have small privately owned generating plants which provide a limited supply for the general public. The larger undertakings, generally, are equipped with diesel driven alternators, generating at American standard low voltages and frequency.

## WATERWORKS

The original source of supply at Blue Hills is exhausted and this area now produces only brackish water, which is mixed with the water consumed by the city. New stations have been constructed at Prospect and the Grove, these areas being several miles west of the city. The system at Perpalls installed for the R.A.F. has also been acquired for the city supply. These new systems are operated either by a series of small electrical pumps or by windmills, the quantity pumped being regulated in order to avoid over-pumping of the wells. All water is chlorinated before being pumped to the reservoirs at Fort Fincastle. The supply is of good quality and of lower salinity than was supplied previously from Blue Hills.

Recent developments in various residential districts have resulted in a large number of extensions to the distribution mains, and the consumption has increased from 63 million imperial gallons in 1934 to 149 million in 1946, more than half being used during the first four months of the year (winter season).

All ground water on the island being only an accumulation of the excess rainfall, it is essential that the method of recovery be carefully designed. Small pumps, the suctions of which are submerged only a few feet in the water, and which cannot draw more than 500 gals. an hour have been installed. These pumps are spaced a reasonable distance apart, so that a maximum of a thousand gallons per acre per day is taken out of the ground. The results have been very gratifying, and the salinity of the wells is remaining fairly stable.

The consumption of this water is rigidly controlled and an effort is being made to restrict its use to domestic purposes, and the watering of lawns, gardens, etc., with it is prohibited. It is only by measures such as these, and by using the strictest economy, that the supply can be expected to remain of moderate salinity, if other pumping areas can be provided to take care of the large amount of new sub-divisions, hotels, and houses.

## SEWERAGE

The Public Board of Works regulates the sanitary arrangements of all new buildings, and buildings which are extensively renovated. Whenever these buildings are located in an area serviced by the sewer system, it is compulsory that all fixtures be connected to the city sewers. The inspection of private work done by private plumbers is enforced, to ensure that all work carried out is according to the most modern methods of sanitation.

All sewers empty into a main reception tank at Malcolm's Park, from which the raw sewage is pumped to the tanks at the sewerage plant on Potters Cay. This plant is of the "activated sludge" type. The crude sewage is broken up, screened and activated so that in its final stages all objectionable odours are eliminated. While the expenses of operating this plant are not covered by the sewerage rates, yet from the standpoint of public health it is extremely profitable.

## Chapter XI : Communications and Public Works

### SHIPPING

During 1946 ships of the Canadian National Steamship Line performed a regular fortnightly freight service from Halifax or Montreal to Nassau, bringing approximately 3,502 tons of cargo. A large percentage of the Colony's imports and exports, however, was transported by locally owned vessels ranging in size from approximately 300 to eighty tons net. These vessels plied between Nassau and Miami, Florida, to which latter port freight for the Bahamas was carried by rail from various parts of the United States of America. A number of these local boats was also engaged in transporting bananas from Cuba and other West Indian islands to Miami.

Due to the stringency of the United States' wireless requirements for passenger-carrying vessels, the carriage of passengers by local boats was abandoned, and the bulk of passengers arriving in or departing from the Colony was transported by aircraft.

In December the Clarke Steamship Company commenced a weekly freight and passenger service from West Palm Beach, Florida. The Seaway Steamship Line inaugurated a passenger service from Jacksonville, Florida, calling at Nassau en route to Cuba and Haiti and again at Nassau on the return journey to Jacksonville on an average of once in every ten days.

The only port in the Colony other than Nassau at which there was shipping activity of any consequence was at Inagua, where ships called for the purpose of taking salt exports principally to Canada. The number of ships calling at Inagua was 240, aggregating a total of 102,210 net tons. The total number of ships entered and cleared at ports within the Colony was 3,447, with a total tonnage of 478,138.

### RAILWAYS

There are no railways in the Colony.

### ROADS

All the main roads in Nassau are treated with asphalt, and in recent years many of the secondary roads have received similar treatment. It is the practice of the Public Board of Works that, whenever a road needs re-conditioning, it is scarified and macadamised and then given a surface treatment of asphalt, no matter how unimportant it may be. By this method, the majority of all the roads in the Island are gradually becoming better, and are being paved with asphalt. Maintenance and repair crews are kept at work on these roads all the year, thus keeping them in good condition. During the years 1942-44 the R.A.F. re-conditioned and asphalted several country roads which connected the airfields. Since the R.A.F. left Nassau, the Board has continued to keep these roads in good condition.

*Vehicles.*

The following vehicles were registered during the year 1946 :—

Motor Cars ...	1,205
Taxi Cabs .....	68
Buses .....	4
Trucks .....	428
Bicycles .....	3,984

## CIVIL AVIATION

The operation of Oakes Field Airport was transferred from the Royal Air Force to the Bahamas Government on the 1st of June, 1946. At the same time a Director of Civil Aviation was appointed and the airport operation and maintenance was undertaken entirely by civilian staff. Certain buildings and items of equipment required for the operation of the airport were taken over from the R.A.F. without prejudice to final financial settlement.

The airport consists of three runways which are on bearings to cater for seasonal directions of wind. These runways are of bituminous surface and constructed to withstand a weight of sixty tons. The main runway, No. 3, is 6,000ft. long by 150ft. wide and No. 1 and No. 2 runways are 5,000ft. long by 150ft. wide. The airport is capable of accommodating all types of modern aircraft. In addition to the width of 150ft. on each side of the runways is a cleared area of level crushed coral which permits swinging of aircraft. There are also extensive taxi tracks. The approaches of the main runway are unobstructed, but on runways Nos. 1 and 2 there are slight obstructions in the form of ridges of low hills which do not in fact present a hazard. The airport has an excellent runway and taxiway lighting which is of the modified British Drem type. The airport is equipped with the necessary facilities in the form of tower radio, crash tenders, ambulances and mobile floodlights to cater for continuous 24-hour operation. Refuelling facilities are available on the airfield. Comprehensive communication services are available in the vicinity of the airport such as telephone system, homing beacon (the property of Pan American Airways), radio range (the property of the U.S. Army Air Corps) and an aviation signals section operated and maintained by Telecommunications consisting of long range C.W. and commercial C.W. circuits with Trinidad, Jamaica and Miami. The control tower incorporates communication facilities suitable for maintaining radio contact with commercial aircraft.

At this period Pan American Airways was conducting passenger flights between Miami and Nassau by agreement with the Bahamas Government. Bahamas Airways Ltd. was operating Out Island schedules with amphibious aircraft and two non-scheduled operators, Willis Air Services and Winged Cargo Inc. were operating transient flights through Nassau to Puerto Rico. In July, 1946, the first aircraft of British South American Airways landed in Nassau during the course of a survey flight for this British Corporation. In August the first

aircraft of F.A.M.A., the Argentine national airline, to operate through Nassau landed at Oakes Field Airport and in September Trans Canada conducted a survey flight.

An airport cafeteria was opened in November to cater for day and night traffic through the airport. In October the tarmac was extended and minor alterations completed for the opening to passenger traffic of a temporary main terminal building which was adapted from a building taken over from the Royal Air Force. Plans had been drawn up and work commenced for the expansion of this building in order to centralise all facilities of the airport. Customs, immigration, signals, air traffic control, administrative offices and companies' offices are now housed in this one building with the exception of Pan American Airways, which company is continuing to use the building loaned during the War years. The use of this temporary terminal building is for an interim period of approximately five years when a permanent airport terminal building will be a requirement which will take a considerable time to construct. It is anticipated that when work is started on the permanent building the present high level of constructional costs will be reduced.

In August revised landing fees were submitted to Government by the Director of Civil Aviation and these were approved and became effective on the 1st of November.

The major companies operating regularly through Nassau on international routes during the year were Pan American Airways and F.A.M., and approximately twelve non-scheduled passenger and freight companies made use of the airport. There were also privately owned aircraft during the season towards the end of December and local commercial flying was being conducted by Bahamas Airways and a newly formed Bahamas Company—Nassau Aviation Company, which was operating charter flights to the Out Islands. In the Out Islands two United States' companies were operating non-scheduled flights from Miami to Cat Cay and Bimini and privately owned aircraft of the Superior Oil Company were conducting daily flights on Company's business to Andros. Hatchet Bay Plantations were also conducting daily flights to Hatchet Bay, Eleuthera on Company's business.

During the course of 1946, Bahamas "B" Licences were issued to commercial pilots who had qualified and eight aircraft were registered in the Bahamas.

Airport revenue, derived from various sources, from the 1st of June, 1946, to the 31st of December was £4,314 3s. The monthly revenue showed an increase as soon as the landing charges were approved coupled with the increase in traffic. An indication of this increase is evident from the comparison of the revenue figures for the month of June, 1946, which were £47 7s. and the month of November, 1946, when the revenue was £832 11s. 6d. The increase in aircraft is shown below.

June	No. of landings	...	102
July	" "	...	124
August	" "	...	117
September	" "	...	187
October	" "	...	220
November	" "	...	273
December	" "	...	283

#### POSTS

During 1946 the business of the Post Office shows a substantial increase over 1945. The increase in the sale of stamps was £8,442.

There is a daily air mail service operated by Pan American Airways between Nassau and Miami, U.S.A. The service is twice daily during the winter months.

During the year under review overseas surface mails were despatched to and received from Miami, Florida by motor vessels. The service was twice a week on an average. However a certain amount of mail was received direct from Canada and Bermuda by freighters operated by Canadian National Steamships. These ships were used at irregular intervals to forward mail direct from Nassau to Jamaica.

Three additional sub-offices were opened on the Out Islands during the year.

#### AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SYSTEM

The Automatic Telephone System was extended with such additional equipment as became available, and orders were placed for a further extension in view of the heavy demands being experienced from post-war developments.

The City Exchange is now filled to capacity, and no further subscribers can be connected until the middle of 1947, when it is anticipated that an additional 200 lines can be made available. Further orders are being placed for an additional 400 lines, but it is unlikely that this capacity will be available for another two years at least, owing to the poor deliveries of equipment.

An extension of the Eastern Satellite Exchange is also planned when the equipment which has been on order for the last eighteen months has been received.

The island of New Providence will then be covered by a reasonably comprehensive automatic telephone system, comprising a main city exchange and three satellite automatic exchanges.

Additional switchboards have been installed in various hotels, and private switchboards are being made available for business houses and offices.

#### RADIO TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH

During 1946 the radio telegraph circuit to Miami was modernised by the introduction of frequency shift radio teleprinter operation

between Nassau and Miami. This system permits high-speed automatic transmission and reception by direct teleprinter machines with automatic retransmission at Miami into the Western Union System of the United States.

A marine radio telephone service was introduced providing radio telephone communication over a range of 300 miles enabling vessels suitably equipped to communicate direct into the automatic telephone system of Nassau. Other similar installations have been provided on the islands of Cat Cay and Inagua, thus giving coverage to the whole of the area of the Bahama Islands for private vessels, coastal service vessels and ocean-going liners.

With the conversion of Oakes Field from a military to a civil airport, telecommunications facilities have been provided for airline companies and passengers.

The radio telephone system to the Out Islands has been extended and improved, and plans are being prepared for further extension.

Numerous telecommunications facilities have been provided for Oil Companies in connection with the oil survey developments.

The radio telephone circuit to Miami was extended for operation during the winter season, and plans have been prepared for the introduction of a second circuit. Installation of this equipment is expected to take place in 1947.

#### BROADCASTING

At a Broadcasting Conference in Washington in February the classification of the broadcasting station and the frequency of operation were altered. The frequency of 640 kcs., which had been previously shared with a station at Los Angeles, had to be relinquished in favour of the frequency of 1,540 kcs., in view of the claims to the use of 640 kcs. by a Cuban broadcasting station. At the same time the Nassau broadcasting station, which had previously been recognised as adherent to the North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement, was granted the classification of a Class 1-A clear channel dominant station on the new frequency of 1,540 kcs., and in accordance with the engineering limits laid down under the Agreement must receive protection from interference according to the North American Regional Broadcasting standards. The change to the new frequency was carried out in June, and operation has proved to be satisfactory. The Bahamas is now signatory to the North American Regional Agreement, and, as such, is entitled to consideration in any future discussions regarding the use of radio frequencies in the standard broadcast band. This is a considerable improvement over the previous conditions under which the station operated and gives the Colony the recognition which it should have in view of its proximity to the United States and other countries signatory to the North American Regional Agreement.

A further North American Regional Broadcasting Conference is to be held in Canada in 1948, at which the allocation of frequencies in the North American region will again be reviewed.

## PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The maintenance and superintendence of all Public Works on the island of New Providence is under the direction of the Public Works Department, which carries out its duties on behalf of the Public Board of Works. This Board consists of five members appointed by the Governor, all funds being granted annually to the Board by the Legislature.

Public Works on the Out Islands are controlled by the Out Island and Economic Investigation Committee, work being under the direction of the Chief Out Island Commissioner. The Public Works Department gives technical advice where necessary, and when requested by the Committee also carries out certain specific works for them on the Out Islands.

Under the control of the Public Board of Works (for New Providence) are the following :—

- Waterworks — Recovery, distribution, and administration.
- Sewerage — Collection, disposals and administration.
- Lighthouses — Construction and maintenance of local lights.
- Building — Inspection and control of plans, construction, sanitation, etc., of both new and renovated buildings.
- Maintenance & construction — Roads, drains, abutments, fire-wells, fire-wharves, parks, public gardens, recreation grounds, forts, cemeteries and public buildings.

The following are the activities of the Public Works Department other than those mentioned in Chapter X.

*Lighthouses.*

There are thirty-seven oil lights, and thirty-nine automatic acetylene lights in operation, which are for the benefit of local or Out Island navigation. These are all maintained and serviced by the Public Works Department, and new ones are also erected by them when necessary.

*Construction of Buildings.*

The Public Board of Works exercises control over the planning and construction of new buildings in certain zones, as authorised by the Buildings Regulations Act. This results in preventing any faulty or flimsy construction, or any insanitary measures, and ensures that no buildings are erected which are not in conformity with the local style of architecture. The results achieved are remarkable, and the large number of houses recently built still contributes to the old-world charm and picturesqueness of Nassau.

*Drains.*

Most roads have proper drainage, in many cases by underground storm sewers. Even with heavy tropical showers, experienced in this

climate, the streets are free of water a short time after the rain has stopped. These drains are kept clean at all times, so that there is no chance of mosquito-breeding or foul odours.

#### *Fire-Well and Fire-Wharves.*

The Board has constructed a number of wells on the shoulders of the roads, which are for fire-fighting. These wells can supply several fire-engines with salt water, at one time if necessary, and they have proved extremely satisfactory, first by saving city-water and, secondly, by providing an adequate supply of water near the residential districts in case of fire. Along the water-front there are several wharves from which the fire-engines also pump sea-water for fire-fighting purposes.

#### *Parks, Playgrounds, etc.*

All parks and playgrounds under the Board are kept free of weeds and in good condition at all times. A nursery is maintained for supplying trees and flowering shrubs for planting in these places, and also shade trees for planting along the roads. The surplus is sold to the public at reasonable prices, so as to assist persons of moderate means in improving their private gardens.

#### *Cemeteries.*

The Board controls all public cemeteries and regulates burials therein, to the extent of seeing that graves are spaced the proper distance apart, and are of the depth provided by the rules.

#### *Public Buildings.*

The Board is responsible for the maintenance of Government House and the main public buildings. At the present time the administrative buildings are inadequate, and proposals are being formulated for extensions to these buildings.

## Chapter XII : Development in Research, etc.

There have been no special developments during the year in history, archaeology, anthropology, botany, in fields of natural history, or in literature, drama, music, painting and sculpture.

Various British, American and local companies are prospecting for oil in the Colony, but, so far, no evidence has been found of the existence of oil.

Preparations are being made for the commemoration, during 1947, of the tercentenary of the settlement of the Island of Eleuthera and the adjoining islands of Harbour Island and St. George's Cay by the Eleutherian adventurers.

## PART III

### Chapter I: Geography and Climate

#### GEOGRAPHY

The Bahamas are an archipelago of islands, cays and rocks, lying between 20° 50' and 27° 25' north latitude and 72° 37' and 80° 32' west longitude, and extending from Inagua on the south to Matanilla Reef on the north—from Mayaguana and its adjacent rocks and cays on the east to and including the Cay Sal Bank on the west, and are separated from Florida, to the west, by the Straits of Florida—and from Cuba, to the south, by the Old Bahama and Nicholas channels. Extending over an area of 760 miles, the Bahamas comprise nearly 700 islands and over 2,000 cays and rocks. The aggregate land surface of the group is 4,375½ square miles, which is slightly less than that of Jamaica, the largest of the British West Indian islands.

New Providence, although not one of the larger islands, is the most important, as it contains the capital, Nassau, which is the chief port, and is inhabited by more than one-quarter of the total population of the Colony. The island is about twenty-one miles in length from east to west, and seven miles in breadth from north to south.

#### CLIMATE

The winter climate of the Bahamas is most delightful. Frost is unknown, the average temperature is about 70° Fahrenheit, the rainfall is slight, and cool breezes prevail. The rainy months are May, June, September and October. The total rainfall for 1946 in New Providence was 49.4 inches.

The greatest heat is experienced during July, August and September, the temperature ranging from 80° to 90° F. The islands are never unhealthy and the malaria mosquito is unknown in the Colony.

### Chapter II: History

At the time when the Bahamas were first discovered, that is to say in 1492, they were inhabited by a race of Indians who were removed to Haiti by the Spaniards to work in the mines. A few stone implements are occasionally found, but, apart from this, there is no trace of the aboriginal inhabitants. The Spaniards made no attempt to colonise the islands, which remained uninhabited until about the year 1629, when they were included in a Royal Grant, from which date they were visited from time to time by settlers from Bermuda. Earlier than that, namely 1578, they were already regarded as part of the British domains. In 1647, a Company of "Eleutherian Adventurers" was formed in London for the purpose of colonising the islands, which were

granted by Parliament to the Company despite the earlier Royal Grant. In 1670, yet a third grant was made by Charles II, vesting the islands in six Lords Proprietors.

Two years after the grant of the charter the first Governor was appointed by the Lords Proprietors. He and his successors found it extremely difficult to cope with the buccaneers, who at this time were the virtual rulers of the country. In 1673, one Governor was seized and deported to Jamaica ; in 1690, another was deposed and imprisoned ; and it seems that the only governors who escaped trouble were those who left the inhabitants to do as they pleased. In addition to internal troubles the Governors appointed by the Lords Proprietors had to deal with invasion. In 1680, the Spaniards destroyed the settlement and carried off the Governor to Cuba. In 1703, a combined force of French and Spaniards destroyed Nassau and carried off the negro slaves, most of the white inhabitants fleeing to Carolina. The new Governor, who arrived in 1704, found New Providence totally uninhabited, and returned to England.

Within a few years, however, Nassau was re-established as the headquarters of the pirates in West Indian waters, and so great were the depredations of these pirates that the British Government found it necessary to send out a Governor to control the Colony and drive the pirates from their stronghold. This Governor, Captain Woodes Rogers, arrived in Nassau in 1718, and in December of that year eight of the leading pirates were executed and the others compelled to give up their nefarious trade. A period of comparative quiet followed. In 1776, however, a fleet belonging to the rebellious American Colonies captured the town of Nassau and carried off the Governor, but after a few days the place was evacuated. Five years later a Spanish force took possession of Nassau and left a garrison, but in 1783 the Spaniards were driven out by a British expedition.

The subsequent history of the Bahamas is comparatively uneventful. The abolition of slavery in 1838 caused an economic and social change ; the outbreak of civil war in the United States led to a period of considerable prosperity in the Colony, which, between the years 1861 and 1865, became a depot for vessels running the "blockade" imposed against the Confederate States.

### Chapter III : Administration

The present constitution of the Bahamas is similar to those of the North American Colonies prior to the War of Independence. The Government is modelled upon that of England in the early days, the Governor representing the Sovereign, and the nominated Legislative Council and the elected House of Assembly representing respectively the Houses of Lords and Commons.

"The Eleutherian Adventurers," who came to the Bahamas from Bermuda after the Parliamentary grant of 1647, brought with them a conception of representative government already established in

Bermuda, and the affairs of the infant settlement were managed by a Governor, a Council, and an elected Senate. The Charter of 1670 to the Lords Proprietors provided for an elected House of Assembly, and the constitution, much as it exists today, was finally settled in 1729, when the Crown assumed direct control of the Colony. The Bahamas enjoy representative, though not responsible, government. The Executive Government is in the hands of a Governor, appointed by the Crown, who has the power of veto, and is advised by an Executive Council. Various executive powers and the right to enact certain subsidiary legislation are vested by law in the Governor in Council.

The Legislative Council, consisting of nine members nominated by the Crown, was created as a separate Council by Royal Letters Patent in 1841.

The House of Assembly is composed of twenty-nine members elected for fifteen districts. The qualification for members is possession of real or personal property to the value of £200. A member must also be a male British subject who has attained the age of twenty-one years and have been ordinarily resident in the Colony for the preceding three years. The Out Islands seldom return a member of their own community, their twenty-one representatives being generally inhabitants of New Providence. The qualification for electors is ownership of land to the value of £5 or the occupation of houses of annual rental value of £2 8s. in New Providence, or half that amount in the Out Islands. Women have not the vote. The normal life of the House is seven years, but it may be dissolved at any time by the Governor, as occurred in June, 1928, and in May, 1935. No forms of local government exist.

## Chapter IV : Weights and Measures

By the Weights and Measures Act (Chapter 172) weights and measures are fixed at the standard of those used in England previous to the introduction of Imperial weights and measures. Imperial weights and measures are used, however, in the collection of duties on imports.

## Chapter V : Newspapers and Periodicals

The following newspapers are published in the Colony :—

*The Nassau Guardian*, published daily.

*The Nassau Daily Tribune*, published daily.

*The Voice*, published weekly.

*The Herald*, published weekly.

No periodicals are published in the Colony.

## Chapter VI: Bibliography

The following publications are available on subjects connected with the Colony :—

Review of Bahamian Economic Conditions and Post-War Problems, by Professor J. Henry Richardson, M.A., Ph.D.

Bahamas Hand Book, 1926, by Miss Mary Moseley, M.B.E.

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The following Government publications are available :—

Laws. Revised edition, volumes 1 and 2, cloth bound, bound half calf.

Annual volumes for years subsequent to 1928.

Single copies of Acts.

Rules, Regulations and Orders-in-Council.

Blue Books.

Official Gazette.

Departmental Reports.

Census, 1943.

Law Finder—A Guide to Legislation in force in the Bahama Islands.



*West Indies  
Colonial Office*



COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS

# Bahamas

## 1947 & 1948



LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

PRICE 2s. 0d. NET

**THE SERIES OF COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS**  
which was re-introduced for the year 1946 (after  
suspension in 1940) is being continued with those  
relating to 1948.

It is anticipated that the Colonies and Protectorates  
for which 1948 Reports are being published will, with  
some additions, be the same as for the previous year  
(see list on cover page 3).

COLONIAL OFFICE

# ANNUAL REPORT ON THE BAHAMAS

FOR THE YEARS

1947 & 1948

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## Contents

	PAGE
PART I Review of the years 1947 and 1948 . . . . .	3
PART II CHAPTER 1 Population . . . . .	7
CHAPTER 2 Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation . . . . .	7
CHAPTER 3 Public Finance and Taxation . . . . .	11
CHAPTER 4 Currency and Banking . . . . .	14
CHAPTER 5 Commerce . . . . .	15
CHAPTER 6 Production . . . . .	17
CHAPTER 7 Social Services . . . . .	20
CHAPTER 8 Legislation . . . . .	26
CHAPTER 9 Justice, Police and Prisons . . . . .	27
CHAPTER 10 Public Utilities and Public Works . . . . .	30
CHAPTER 11 Communications . . . . .	36
CHAPTER 12 General . . . . .	42
PART III CHAPTER 1 Geography and Climate . . . . .	43
CHAPTER 2 History . . . . .	44
CHAPTER 3 Administration . . . . .	45
CHAPTER 4 Weights and Measures . . . . .	46
CHAPTER 5 Newspapers and Periodicals . . . . .	46
CHAPTER 6 Bibliography . . . . .	46
MAP . . . . .	<i>At end</i>

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LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1949

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**The cover illustration shows a typical street in Nassau**

## PART I

### Review of the Years 1947 and 1948

OWING to delay in the preparation of the 1947 report it was decided to combine the reports of 1947 and 1948 in a joint publication. The present report therefore covers the two years, and since compilation has been pressed forward to make it available as early as possible, some of the figures for 1948 have had to be included only as estimates.

#### GENERAL

Both the years 1947 and 1948 saw large numbers of tourists visiting the Colony. Not all visitors were purely on vacation, many came to investigate possibilities of investment, either in the Colony's main industry of tourism, or in agriculture and its subsidiaries such as canning, or in real estate and in homes for themselves to live in. The most striking example of external interest in the Islands for the purpose of investment was the project submitted by Butlin Bahamas Limited to construct a vacation village near the settlement of West End on the island of Grand Bahama. This was approved by the Government and an agreement with the company was ratified by the Legislature in August, 1948.

The Colony's proximity to the American continent caused it to feel, more acutely probably than elsewhere, the world's dollar shortage and the repercussions that ensued upon the decision by H.M. Government to suspend the arrangements for the convertibility of sterling into dollars in August, 1947. This event marked a turning point in the Colony's planning during the two-year period under review. During the War, and immediately thereafter the Colony had been a considerable dollar earner, building up a credit of some \$10,000,000. With the return of peace and the need to restock trade and restart the tourist and other industries, this credit began to be heavily drawn upon. A building boom was created and development generally in the Colony, both by Government and by private enterprise, demanded the use of dollars for purchases in the United States and Canada. The influx of tourists from the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. and Canada was on a scale that created conditions for a black market in dollars. A situation therefore arose from August, 1947, onwards in which it became the prime consideration of Government to control the Colony's economy so as to redress the dollar position.

Meanwhile boom conditions in the building industry and the advent of outside capital in many fields brought an increase of revenue to the Exchequer, particularly from customs duties.

Against an estimated revenue of £820,000 for 1947 the actual revenue was over £1,352,000. Again in 1948 against an estimate of just over £960,000, the year is expected to close with a revenue of £1,360,000. Prices followed North American trends and inflated conditions in the

Colony were reflected in an ever-increasing cost of living, estimated at the end of 1948 to represent a rise of over 300 per cent on the 1939 index. The repercussions of this rising cost of living were felt most severely in the Civil Service where a number of officers resigned to take more remunerative employment outside; others found difficulty in making ends meet, even with the grant of temporary salary increases amounting to no less a sum than £208,000 for the whole Civil Service. At the end of 1948 the Colony was fortunate to secure Sir Alan Burns, G.C.M.G., to carry out an enquiry into conditions affecting Public Establishments.

#### THE DOLLAR POSITION

The problem of redressing the Colony's adverse dollar position and planning to build up its economy in a way that would make it not only self-sufficient, but an earner of dollars for the United Kingdom pool, was considered under five main heads:

##### *Import Control*

With the assistance of the Chamber of Commerce steps were taken to restrict to the greatest extent possible the importation of luxury and non-essential goods compatible with maintaining the tourist industry.

##### *Exchange Control*

Restrictions on possible sources of dollar leakage were devised, and the co-operation of the public sought, for example in reducing the use of dollars for holiday travel in hard currency countries.

##### *Tourist Industry*

Examination of the situation has revealed that with the limited number of beds available in the Colony, the tourist potential is too small to bring in a net dollar return over a four-month season sufficient to supply the dollar requirements of the industry as well as the other dollar needs of the Colony. Encouragement was given wherever possible to the building of new hotels, apartment houses and homes to increase the Colony's tourist capacity and dollar income.

A notable instance is the Butlin Vacation Village already mentioned, which is planned to provide 1,000 beds for Americans in the middle income brackets from 1st January, 1950 onwards and thereafter to expand to 2,000 beds.

##### *Building Industry*

As a source of large employment and in order to relieve the housing shortage, thus making more accommodation available for tourists, steps were taken to encourage, under a Government Order, the erection of the smaller types of houses. The secondary purpose of this order was to restrict an unjustified use of dollar materials on luxury houses for which there was a considerable demand.

##### *Production*

Government considered as fundamental in planning long-term policy the need to raise the Colony's productive capacity and reduce the demand for imports, particularly foodstuffs. A committee of

practical men was set up and the report of this committee covered the whole field in great detail, recommending restrictions in certain directions which would stimulate local production. In the absence of a fully staffed Agricultural Department progress has been slow, but in many directions private enterprise, in which term is included the operations of the peasant farmer, has rallied to the need and embarked on agricultural developments which may well prove significant in time.

The end of 1948 closed with the announcement by Hatchet Bay Plantations of its intention to sell its holdings in Eleuthera. Over the last ten years this company has been the sole supplier of the dairy and poultry needs of the Colony.

#### SEA AND AIR COMMUNICATIONS

During 1947 the Colony was well served by cruises by the Eastern Steamship Line, which were continued during the summer. The lack of these shipping facilities was severely felt during 1948 and steps are being considered to secure further sea connections with the American continent.

In the field of civil aviation the Colony was fortunate to have British South American Airways operating twice weekly between Nassau and London via Bermuda and the Azores, a service which was inaugurated on 7th June, 1947. After Oakes Field had been made the main Caribbean maintenance base for the Corporation a daily service to Miami was inaugurated on 16th August. Trans-Canada Airlines also secured a franchise to operate between Canada and Nassau, and the inaugural flight was made on 26th November, 1948, when Mr. G. P. McGregor, the President of the air line, and a number of distinguished Canadians visited Nassau.

#### ROYAL WEDDING

On the occasion of the wedding of Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth to the Duke of Edinburgh, public subscriptions were raised to the amount of £2,600 for the endowment of hospital beds in England and a consignment of locally canned pineapples formed part of the Colony's wedding gift to the Princess.

#### NAVAL VISITS

H.M.S. *Porlock Bay* visited the Colony between 3rd and 14th July, 1947, and conveyed H.E. the Governor on a tour of certain Out Islands. During 1948 His Excellency and the Chief Out Island Commissioner went on a similar tour on H.M.S. *Sparrow*.

The Colony was also visited by H.M.S. *Battleaxe*, *Crossbow*, *Sheffield*, *Aisne* and *Sirius*. In addition a number of American naval vessels, destroyers and submarines, called at Nassau, and the personnel were entertained ashore by the standing committee charged with entertainment for H.M. Ships, under the chairmanship of Commander R. Langton Jones, D.S.O., Inspector of Imperial Lighthouses.

## YACHTING

Two Bahamian yachtsmen—Durward Knowles and Sloane Farrington—brought distinction to the Bahamas by winning the World's (Star Class) Series in September, 1947, at Los Angeles, California. In 1948 sailing the same yacht (Gem II) these outstanding yachtsmen qualified at Torbay in the elimination races to represent the British Empire. After an eventful series, they were finally placed fourth in the Olympic Games.

## HURRICANES

On 16th to 17th September, 1947, a hurricane passed over the West End of Grand Bahama, Bimini and Abaco, the greatest damage being suffered at West End. The Acting Governor flew to the scene immediately after the hurricane and all necessary relief was provided by the Government for the sufferers.

During 1948 no hurricanes passed directly over the Islands, but minor damage was done to Grand Bahama and Abaco by the hurricane which swept Miami and other parts of Florida.

## TERCENTENARY ISSUE

To commemorate the Charter of the Eleutherian Adventurers in 1647 an issue of a set of 15 tercentenary stamps was put on sale to the public in September, 1948.

## CHANGE OF COLONIAL SECRETARY

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. D. G. Stewart, was transferred to the post of Financial Secretary in Palestine in January, 1947. He was succeeded on 25th May, 1947, by Mr. F. A. Evans, on transfer from Gambia, West Africa.

## PART II

### Chapter 1: Population

THE estimated population for the whole Colony on 31st December, 1947, was 75,018, made up of 35,348 males and 39,670 females. As a consequence of further information now available the estimated population for 1946 has been revised and the figure is now 73,353. The increase in 1947 over the previous year is therefore 1,665, made up of 913 males and 752 females.

The estimated population for 1948 was 76,620, made up of 36,175 males and 40,445 females. This is an increase of 1,602 over 1947, made up of 927 males and 675 females. These totals of 75,018 for 1947 and 76,620 for 1948, may be compared with totals of 69,991 for 1944 and 72,948 for 1945.

There were 2,523 births in the Colony during 1947, or 36.6 per 1,000 compared with 2,678 births, or 38.8 per 1,000 in 1948, based on the 1943 census figures.

There were 221 deaths of children under one year in 1947, or 91.5 per 1,000 live births, and in 1948 the figure was 280 or 109.5 per 1,000 live births.

There were 987 deaths in the Colony during 1947 and 1,168 during 1948, or 14.3 per 1,000 and 16.9 per 1,000 respectively, based on the 1943 census figures.

There were 591 marriages in the Colony during 1947 and 718 during 1948. The marriages were performed by the Marriage Officers of the following denominations:

	1947	1948
Anglican . . . . .	78	111
Roman Catholic . . . . .	69	71
Methodist . . . . .	73	140
Baptist . . . . .	287	294
Others . . . . .	84	102

### Chapter 2: Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation

#### INDUSTRIES

The principal industry of the Colony is the tourist industry. Post-war conditions brought a demand for accommodation which existing hotels and boarding houses were unable to fill, and there was as a result considerable activity in providing more accommodation. One major apartment house project was carried out in Nassau and several others with considerable potential were commenced in 1947, and in some cases opened their doors to tourists in the winter of 1948-49. The major

enterprise in this sphere was the Butlin Vacation Village in Grand Bahama, which is designed to provide accommodation, on the lines made famous by Mr. Butlin in the United Kingdom, for 1,000 American visitors in the middle-income brackets for a minimum of a six-month season. Thereafter the promoters hope to expand.

A building boom was created in 1947 because materials were more readily available, but it was to some extent restricted in September, 1947, by the increasing stringency on the use of dollars. Nevertheless, during the latter part of 1947 and 1948 building applications, particularly for houses estimated to cost less than £6,000, reached an unprecedented level.

Other industries in the accepted sense in the Bahamas are the lumber industry and salt production by West India Chemicals in Inagua. There were considerable developments in the former, particularly in Grand Bahama, where kiln-drying has been introduced and production considerably stepped up. The possibility of pit-prop and pulp-wood production has been actively explored, and the Government Conservator of Forests at Jamaica visited the Colony to report on the Crown's forest reservations. West India Chemicals, Ltd., increased salt production during the period, and are considering beginning operations with magnesite plant.

The tomato industry, after initial doubts as to whether Canada would allow the fruit to enter during the year, had a remarkably successful season in 1947-48, and, notwithstanding the competition from America in 1948-49, sent very considerable exports to the Dominion.

Crawfishing provided employment for a large number of seamen during the fishing season, and the trade was a considerable dollar earner.

Native straw-work and shell-work continued in full operation, and there were good sales locally as well as exports.

The sponge industry has not recovered from the marine disease that devastated the sponge beds in 1939, and this and the sisal industry are now virtually in abeyance.

The recruitment of Bahamians for agricultural work in the United States provided employment for some 4,000 unskilled labourers during 1947 and some 2,000 during 1948. Consequently the serious problem of general unemployment did not arise.

The following table shows approximately how workers were employed:

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Unskilled Labourers . . . .	1,800	400	2,200
Semi-skilled Labourers . . . .	1,600	200	1,800
Carpenters . . . . .	600		600
Masons . . . . .	300		300
Painters . . . . .	300		300
Mechanics . . . . .	120		120
Fishermen . . . . .	400		400
Totals	5,120	600	5,720

A substantial additional number of unskilled labourers, male and female, obtained casual employment in seasonal occupations or were engaged in peasant farming.

### WAGES

In certain industries wages are regulated by Orders in Council made under the Minimum Wage Act of 1936, but the increased cost of living in the Colony, which is very high—the index being the highest in the West Indies—has accelerated the increase of wages far beyond the minimum in every employment. For example, the unskilled labourer's daily wage of 2s. just over a decade ago, shows a very marked increase to 8s. to 10s. per day.

The following range of wages in the various occupations, trades and enterprises for an 8-hour day (overtime  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times) is based on the ability of the individual worker:

	1947		1948	
	8 hour day		8 hour day	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Unskilled .	8s. to 10s.	2s. 6d. to 4s.	8s. to 10s.	4s. to 4s. 6d.
Semi-skilled	12s. to 16s.	8s. to 10s.	12s. to 16s.	8s. to 10s.
Craftswomen:				
Shell-work		10s. to 16s.		10s. to 16s.
Straw-work		6s. to 12s.		6s. to 12s.
Carpenters .	20s. to 40s.		30s. to 50s.	
Masons .	20s. to 40s.		30s. to 50s.	
Painters .	20s. to 30s.		25s. to 40s.	
Mechanics .	20s. to 35s.		20s. to 40s.	

In not a few instances employment of both skilled and unskilled labour is not continuous, and unskilled male labourers often receive 5s. to 8s. per day for casual employment. Cooks and housemaids and general domestic help are paid from 20s. to 60s. per week according to hours of employment and arrangement with employers.

### *Cost of Living*

The cost of living in New Providence is extremely high. During the winter season the tariff in first-class hotels varies from £4. 5s. to £10 per day (inclusive) and in the smaller hotels from £1. 15s. to £4 per day (inclusive). During May to November, rooms may be obtained in the smaller hotels for approximately £1. 5s. per day. A furnished house costs from about £360 to £600 a year. It is estimated that, to live in New Providence in reasonable comfort, it would cost a man, excluding rent, if single £600 a year, if married without children £1,000 a year, and if married with two children £1,200 a year. In the Out Islands there are a few boarding houses, but suitable bungalows would be difficult to obtain.

The labourer's staple articles of diet are flour, fish, hominy, meal, sugar, and occasionally meat, the cost of these being greatly enhanced by

the prevailing high prices. (For exemptions from duty on staple food-stuffs see Chapter 3.) He can obtain lodging for about 20s. or 40s. per week compared with 4s. per week in 1936. He is saved the cost of educating his children or providing medical treatment as both these are furnished by the Government without cost to him.

The cost-of-living index on 1st January, 1949, was 311 as compared with 323 in January, 1948, and 292 in March, 1947, the figures being based on 100 in September, 1939. The weighted system is used in assessing the cost of living.

#### LEGISLATION

The principal laws and regulations in force are:

- The Labour Minimum Wage Act, 1936
- The Employment of Children Prohibition Act, 1938
- Employment of Young Persons Act, 1939
- Recruiting of Workers Act, 1939
- Trade Unions Act, 1943
- Workmen's Compensation Act, 1943
- The Labour Board Act, 1946
- Children & Young Persons Act, 1947

#### TRADE UNIONS

There were in 1947 only two trade unions in the Colony, namely, the Bahamas Trades and Labour Union and the Bahamas Taxi-Cab Union, both of which were organised in New Providence during 1946 and were duly registered under the provisions of the Trade Unions Act.

In 1948 two new unions were organised and registered, namely the Bahamas Plumbers Union and the Bahamas Typographical Union.

#### LABOUR DISPUTES

There were no labour disputes during the period under review. The Labour Board Act of 1946 provided for the establishing of a Labour Board to act as a conciliatory body in regulating employer-employee relations. The Board reports and makes recommendations to the Governor-in-Council.

#### LABOUR OFFICE

There is no permanent Labour Department, but a temporary office has been in existence since 1943 to organise and supervise the recruitment of labourers for agricultural work in the United States and to operate an accounting system in respect of compulsory deductions from workers' earnings for the support of their dependents. An idea of the scope of the work involved may be obtained from the fact that wage deductions in 1947 totalled \$761,561.41.

The staff of the Labour Office consists of a Labour Officer, a Liaison Officer and 12 clerks.

## Chapter 3: Public Finance and Taxation

The totals of revenue and expenditure for the last five years are as follows:

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	£	£
1943 . . .	614,245	544,103
1944 . . .	671,397	625,744
1945 . . .	607,972	704,504
1946 . . .	823,604	839,292
1947 . . .	1,352,782	1,112,521

The actual excess of revenue over expenditure for this period was £243,836.

The authorised Public Debt on 31st December, 1947, amounted to £245,000, which represented a loan of £150,000 raised by sale of debentures issued under the Hotel Loan Act, 1924, £35,000 raised in November, 1936, for installing a new telephone system, £25,000 in respect of an additional Telephone Loan, 1937, and £35,000 for new electrical plant raised in 1937. All these loans were raised locally. Provision is made for the redemption of these loans by annual contributions from the revenue to Sinking Funds, which on 31st December, 1947, stood as follows (market value of the securities):

				£
Hotel Loan	1924	Redemption Fund	. .	92,475
Telephone Loan	1936	" "	. .	29,252
Telephone Loan	1937	" "	. .	16,491
Electricity Loan	1937	" "	. .	20,758

Total held for repayment £158,976

The uncovered debt was £86,024 at 31st December, 1947.

The chief liquid assets of the Colony consist of surplus fund investments in England in trustee securities bearing interest at approximately  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, and amounting at the end of the financial year 1947 to £100,187 market value, cash (local and Crown Agents) £400,049, together with a loan of £250,000 (free of interest) to His Majesty's Government. Other principal assets are represented by the Golf Course Fund, £31,684, and the Government Property (P.W.D.) Fund, £25,805. Advances recoverable of £439,278 were offset by a liability of £320,169 in deposits. The uninvested cash liability on account of the Post Office Savings Bank stood at £2,670 on 31st December, while other liabilities consisted of Bahamas War Savings Certificates and Stamps, £3,744, and an amount of £5,650 held for repayment of war loan debentures which had not yet been presented for redemption.

Apart from real property tax, and a probate duty of 2 per cent on personalty, there is no direct taxation in the Colony. The revenue is mainly derived from the following sources:

	1947 £	1946 £	1945 £
Customs. . . . .	774,546	483,804	319,177
Port, wharf and harbour dues . . . . .	32,364	31,398	30,034
Licences and internal revenue . . . . .	44,289	22,143	16,395
Real Property Tax . . . . .	13,240	13,929	9,754
Fees of Court or office, etc. . . . .	102,135	68,793	59,704
Post Office Revenue . . . . .	47,532	54,304	45,592
Interest . . . . .	8,259	6,754	7,545
Electric Power Receipts . . . . .	85,905	73,856	60,937
Telegraphs and Telephones . . . . .	62,763	56,233	49,813
Civil Airport Fees . . . . .	16,406	1,829	—

There are no excise duties in the Colony. Stamp duties are imposed on instruments used in civil proceedings in the Supreme Court or in commercial or other transactions, and are based on the value of the transaction. The Stamp Amendment Act, 1936, levies a tax of 2d. on all cheques.

**Expenditure under main heads for the years 1945-47 was:**

<i>Head</i>	1947 £	1946 £	1945 £
1. Public Debit . . . . .	19,664	23,378	25,430
2. Pensions and Gratuities . . . . .	21,669	19,022	17,385
3. Legislative Council . . . . .	631	657	488
4. House of Assembly . . . . .	6,528	3,779	3,233
5. Governor and Staff . . . . .	7,145	4,421	4,265
6. Secretariat . . . . .	3,222	3,015	2,665
7. Treasury Department . . . . .	2,746	2,725	2,641
8. Customs Department . . . . .	11,171	8,929	14,316
8a. Immigration Department . . . . .	1,129	917	566
9. Judicial . . . . .	6,563	3,609	4,388
10. Legal Department . . . . .	1,548	1,860	1,869
11. Registrar General . . . . .	2,013	1,757	2,329
12. Police Department . . . . .	52,636	44,037	39,023
12a. Police Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	1,059	—
13. Fire Department . . . . .	1,629	3,332	1,307
13a. Fire Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	—	—
14. Prison Department . . . . .	26,889	15,156	13,428
14a. Prison Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	3,651	261
15. Audit Department . . . . .	1,481	1,478	1,389
16. Post Office . . . . .	35,382	46,059	43,827
16a. Post Office, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	93	—
17. Telecommunications Department . . . . .	60,637	40,317	34,254
17a. Telecommunications, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	8,727	1,199
18. Libraries . . . . .	2,060	1,571	1,494
19. Education . . . . .	63,747	40,070	35,982

<i>Head</i>	1947 £	1946 £	1945 £
19a. Education, Non-recurrent. . . . .	—	11,798	4,248
20. Port and Marine . . . . .	27,634	24,802	27,788
20a. Port and Marine, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	7,419	518
21. Medical Department . . . . .	90,900	57,723	47,924
21a. Medical Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	5,138	3,054
22. General Clerical Staff . . . . .	27,299	25,087	19,589
23. Public Works Department . . . . .	9,863	9,364	8,514
24. Public Works, Recurrent, New Providence . . . . .	33,742	29,724	26,794
25. Public Works, Recurrent, Out Islands. . . . .	10,735	7,962	7,548
26. Public Works, Non-recurrent, New Providence . . . . .	23,003	10,332	19,181
27. Public Works, Non-recurrent, Out Islands . . . . .	10,243	5,888	20,020
28. Agricultural and Marine Products Board . . . . .	12,357	10,272	12,147
28a. Agricultural and Marine Products Board, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	—	4,723
29. Development Board. . . . .	50,801	34,732	17,061
30. Electrical Department . . . . .	64,334	39,704	41,356
30a. Electrical Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	7,009	23,016
31. Labour Office . . . . .	5,224	4,321	—
Ice Plant . . . . .	—	—	—
Ice Plant, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	—	—
32. Out Island Department . . . . .	46,305	12,687	11,632
32a. Out Island Department, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	17,367	4,047
33. Water and Sewerage . . . . .	50,354	15,345	11,772
33a. Water and Sewerage, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	6,628	17,619
34. Miscellaneous . . . . .	273,475	89,243	92,529
34a. Miscellaneous, Non-recurrent . . . . .	—	94,289	6,399
35. Industrial School . . . . .	5,787	5,521	5,388
War Measures. . . . .	—	—	19,898
36. Civil Aviation . . . . .	33,287	24,193	—

*Note:* All non-recurrent "a" Heads are included under main heads in 1947.

Final statistics of revenue and expenditure in respect of 1948 are not yet available, but the estimated figures are as follows:

Revenue . . . . .	£1,350,000
Expenditure . . . . .	£1,294,000

## CUSTOMS TARIFF

Flour, rice, tinned milk, brown sugar, salt beef, salt pork, and raw coffee are admitted to the Colony duty free when of Empire origin,

other staple foodstuffs pay a low specific duty and are exempted from emergency tax. The duty payable on these items is listed below:

Flour . . . . .	1s. per 100 lb. bag, preference 100 per cent
Rice . . . . .	1s. per 100 lb. bag, preference 100 per cent
Milk (condensed) . . . . .	10 per cent, preference 100 per cent
Milk (evaporated) . . . . .	20 per cent, preference 50 per cent
Sugar (brown) . . . . .	1s. 3d. per 100 lb., preference 100 per cent
Sugar (white) . . . . .	3s. per 100 lb., preference 50 per cent
Salt Beef . . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 100 per cent
Salt Pork . . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 100 per cent
Raw Coffee . . . . .	1d. per lb., preference 100 per cent, 5 per cent war tax
Tea . . . . .	6d. per lb., preference 50 per cent, 5 per cent war tax
Grits and Corn Meal . . . . .	1s. 6d. per 98 lb., preference 25 per cent
Pure Lard . . . . .	3s. 4d. per lb., preference 50 per cent
Potatoes . . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 50 per cent

The general *ad valorem* duty is 20 per cent plus an emergency tax of 5 per cent *ad valorem*.

Spirits and tobacco are taxed specifically at relatively high rates. Gasoline and oils pay specific duties with an additional sales tax on gasoline.

A sliding tariff is provided for the protection of the Colony's agricultural production, the maximum rate being placed sufficiently high to preclude the importation of any item which is produced in sufficient quantities locally. Preferential margins are designed to implement the Ottawa and Anglo-American trade agreements.

Provision is made for the exemption from duty of Government stores, supplies for Armed Forces, industrial and educational supplies and meritorious awards.

## Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

British sterling money is declared to be the money of account under the British Currency Act (Chapter 159). Under the Proclamation of His Majesty in Council of 17th October, 1936, however, silver coins of the United Kingdom ceased with effect from 1st November, 1936, to be legal tender in the Colony for the payment of an amount exceeding 40 shillings.

Local currency consisting of notes of 4s., 10s., £1 and £5 denominations, are issued by the Bahamas Government Currency Commissioners. A total of £596,500 of these notes was in circulation at the end of 1947, and £605,000 at the end of 1948.

Owing to the geographical position of the Colony and its dependence on tourism for its revenue, American currency circulates freely and is accepted at the rate of \$4.00 to the pound sterling, it being obligatory upon residents to turn in all dollars received to the authorised dealers.

The Royal Bank of Canada has maintained a branch in Nassau for many years, and in September, 1947, Barclay's Bank (Dominion Colonial and Overseas) Ltd., opened a branch in Nassau.

The Post Office Savings Bank had deposits amounting to £361,140 for the year ended 30th June, 1947, which was an increase of £40,433 over 1946. There was an increase of 1,621 in the number of depositors during the year.

Deposits at the end of June, 1948, amounted to £359,433 or £1,707 less than 1947. There was a corresponding decrease of 148 in the number of depositors.

There was a large influx of British capital during 1947 and 1948 seeking investment.

## Chapter 5: Commerce

### IMPORTS

The Colony depends almost entirely on outside sources of supply for its requirements. In 1948, the value of imports was £4,720,151 compared with £4,202,404 in 1947.

In 1947 the bulk of the Colony's foodstuffs came principally from Canada and the United States of America. Flour, cooking fats, butter, frozen meats and condensed and evaporated milk were obtained principally from Canada. Corn products, pickled meats, fresh and preserved fruit and vegetables and rice came primarily from the United States of America. In 1948, Canada and the United States of America were still the principal sources of imported foodstuffs, but the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand supplied in substantial quantities some of the articles previously imported from Canada and the United States of America, such as cooking fats from the United Kingdom, canned meats from Australia and butter from New Zealand. Pickled meats, which came principally from the United States of America in 1947, were largely imported from Canada in 1948. Sugar came from Barbados in both 1947 and 1948. The demand for fresh milk, poultry and eggs was met by local production. During the years under review, cotton piece-goods and wearing apparel came principally from the United States of America.

Woollen piece-goods, which were imported in substantial quantities from the United Kingdom in pre-war years, were difficult to obtain in 1947, but in 1948, these goods were obtainable fairly easily, and importations approximately doubled the 1947 figure.

Motor-cars and tyres which came mainly from the United States of America and Canada in 1947, came principally from the United Kingdom in 1948. Importations from the United Kingdom exceeded in quantity and value the combined American and Canadian total.

### EXPORTS

Total exports in 1947 amounted to £721,615 compared with £551,920 in 1948. Domestic exports in 1947 amounted to £361,504, and in 1948 totalled £348,208.

The principal countries of destination of domestic exports during both 1947 and 1948 were Canada, the United States of America and Cuba.

Salt, an important item, went substantially to Canada. Tomatoes, which showed a substantial increase in 1948, also went to Canada. Exports of tomatoes in 1947 amounted to £46,350 compared with £92,230 in 1948. Crawfish, shells, straw- and shell-work went to the United States of America.

In 1947, lumber to the value of £38,068 was exported principally to Cuba. In 1948, exports of this article amounted to £70,903 and went principally to Cuba and Jamaica.

The total value of the Colony's trade during the last five years was as follows:

	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Imports .	1,735,899	1,806,019	2,840,576	4,202,404	4,720,151
Exports (excluding specie) .	338,482	432,202	399,319	721,290	550,357

Re-exports were valued at £360,111 in 1947 and £203,712 in 1948.

#### IMPORTS: *Principal Items*

<i>Article</i>	1947		1948	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Butter . . . cwt.	3,803	45,274	3,289	46,688
Cheese . . . cwt.	1,394	17,933	1,154	17,345
Flour . . . brls.	55,502	219,246	54,198	204,934
Animal Foodstuffs . cwt.	78,396	103,592	74,445	114,937
Lard Substitutes . cwt.	6,993	69,304	11,636	96,549
Pickled Meats . . cwt.	6,663	55,648	5,756	44,414
Canned Meats . . Value	—	39,161	—	60,056
Fresh Meats . . . cwt.	8,556	99,327	10,538	123,939
Milk, cond. and evap.. Value	—	75,160	—	77,211
Rice . . . cwt.	14,906	34,485	19,113	58,507
Hominy . . . cwt.	22,205	44,382	28,520	51,906
Sugar . . . cwt.	16,251	32,498	19,452	90,626
Cigarettes. . . thousands	47,896	37,877	39,349	34,877
Lumber . . . thous. feet	2,288	76,578	2,985	113,210
Shingles . . . thous. lin. in.	16,846	21,678	32,125	44,318
Wearing Apparel . Value	—	127,790	—	131,444
Boots-Shoes . . . Prs.	125,945	66,672	122,136	84,997
Cement . . . cwt.	172,552	56,502	207,673	72,317
Cotton Piece M. goods				
Sq. yds.	1,009	107,438	728	76,060
Electrical Apparatus and Appliances . Value	—	115,702	—	124,825
Furniture . . . Value	—	171,258	—	161,547
Hardware . . . Value	—	129,343	—	211,396

# PRODUCTION

17

<i>Article</i>	1947		1948	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Medicines and Drugs . Value	—	42,229	—	48,105
Machinery . . . Value	—	138,736	—	154,270
Motor-cars and Trucks No.	483	154,000	445	174,162
Oils, Crude . . thous. gals.	1,602	41,085	2,083	74,278
Gasoline . . . thous. gals.	2,826	108,704	1,807	77,422
Kerosene . . . thous. gals.	587	16,453	628	26,153
Lubricating . . thous. gals.	69	11,116	89	15,682
Paints . . . . Value	—	63,052	—	59,278
Paper . . . . Value	—	25,868	—	36,384
Soap, Common . . cwt.	7,160	32,452	8,065	45,381
Toilet Preps. . . Value	—	41,601	—	42,976
Woollen Piece-goods thous. sq. yds.	58	33,928	101	59,587

## EXPORTS: *Principal Items*

<i>Article</i>	1947		1948	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Sisal . . . . cwt.	4,193	10,378	5,100	13,409
Sponge . . . . cwt.	276	52,352	129	8,543
Tomatoes . . thous. bush.	53	46,350	102	92,230
Crawfish . . . . cwt.	8,290	57,672	14,080	67,764
Salt . . . . thous. bush.	2,033	65,961	882	45,623
Lumber . . . . thous. feet	965	38,068	3,347	70,903
Shell- and Straw-work .	—	8,827	—	11,229

## Chapter 6: Production

The natural resources of the Colony are marine, agricultural and forest products. Except for forest exploitation on the islands of Abaco, Grand Bahama and Andros, production is conducted individually, there being neither factories, plantations nor mines anywhere in the Colony.

Of the products of the Colony, sponge, crawfish, salt, tomatoes, shell, sisal, straw-work, hardwoods and lumber are exported, other commodities are at present produced only for local consumption.

No actual distinction exists between cultivation or other forms of production by persons of European and non-European descent. The former are principally engaged in commerce and the latter mainly in production; but persons of both races may be found engaged in one or the other of these pursuits, and such limited agricultural employment as exists is not restricted entirely to one race.

### AGRICULTURE

The efforts on the part of the Board of Agriculture to foster and encourage agriculture, animal husbandry and the protection of the

marine products within the Colony have been well maintained during the years 1947 and 1948.

The recruitment of agricultural labourers for work in the United States continued during the period under review and thus drew a number of workers who would otherwise have been engaged in agriculture in the Colony.

Owing to the restrictions on the importation of foodstuffs from dollar countries much more attention was paid and greater efforts were put forth by the farmers to increase production, and as a result, there was no necessity for Government to render any assistance to any section of the Colony with the exception of the areas which suffered from the hurricane in September, 1947.

*Vegetables.* The growing of such crops as cabbages, beets, carrots, spinach, English peas, lima beans, okras, etc., was carried on throughout the Colony especially in areas where weather conditions were favourable. Large quantities of seasonal vegetables were always available in the local market.

*Onions.* Owing to a shortage of seed during 1947 there was a decreased acreage of this crop. Nevertheless, a fair crop of excellent quality was produced and consumed locally. The 1948 crop promises to be a bumper one as there was no shortage in the supply of seed during the season. This crop will begin to come on the local market during March, 1949.

*Okras.* The growing of okras for export is a new industry which continues to attract the attention of many progressive farmers. During 1947, 669,552 lb. were exported valued at £16,749 10s. 8d. During 1948 only 121,832 lb. were exported, valued at £4,926. This decrease was due mainly to the fact that at the time of the planting season it could not be ascertained definitely what quantity the Canadian Government would take from this Colony.

*Tomatoes.* During 1947, 1,100 acres were under cultivation; 52,879 bushels were exported valued at £46,350. The average price paid at the auctions during this season was 14s. 6d. per lug, the highest average on record. During 1948, 101,920 bushels valued at £92,230 were exported. This crop averaged 10s. per lug.

The Board of Agriculture assisted by furnishing seeds, fertiliser, packing material, labels and marketing facilities, etc., to the farmers.

*Pineapples.* A steady increase in the expansion of this industry is taking place. The exports during 1947 amounted to 8,333 dozen valued at £2,024 as compared with 2,672 dozen valued at £692 exported during 1948. This decrease, so far as export figures are concerned, does not mean that the crop was smaller, but most of the crop was canned locally by the Food for Britain Committee and the J. S. Johnson Co.

*Citrus.* Efforts directed towards the expansion of this industry were maintained, and thousands of budded plants were sold to the general public in New Providence and the Out Islands. There was a marked increase in the number of plants set out especially by those who were

establishing new homes. The crop during 1947 was the largest since the resuscitation of the industry.

*Bananas.* A great deal of attention was paid during 1947 and 1948 to the cultivation of this important item of food. Several farmers in New Providence secured hundreds of suckers from the Out Islands, and set them out on their holdings. Results obtained were very good and prices remunerative. Apart from these results, thousands of bunches were sent in to the Produce Exchange in Nassau from the Out Islands. This fruit forms a very important asset to the dietary of the population.

*Sisal.* Peasant farmers continue to plant small areas. The old acreages gave fair results together with remunerative prices. During 1947, 210 tons were exported valued at £10,378 compared with 255 tons valued at £13,409 in 1948.

*Sansevieria.* It was thought at one time that sansevieria might replace sisal as a peasant industry, but no interest has been displayed in the production of this staple product and the farms established at Andros, Cat Island, Long Island, Exuma and Abaco have been abandoned.

*Fodder Crops.* No success has yet been achieved by the Agricultural Board in their efforts to interest the peasant farmer in the growing of imported fodder crops, and thus the varieties grown at the Board's Experimental Station in 1948 and the efforts directed towards distributing these grasses have proved a failure.

#### ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The following table shows the quantity of livestock in the Colony:

<i>Livestock</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	
	1947	1948
Horses . . . .	3,000	3,200
Horned Cattle . . . .	3,100	3,700
Sheep . . . .	20,700	21,500
Goats . . . .	13,000	14,000
Swine . . . .	7,000	8,000
Poultry . . . .	337,000	375,000

The importance of animal husbandry to agricultural development in the Colony has always been stressed by the Board of Agriculture.

The Board periodically furnishes thorough-bred stock to farmers on the Out Islands for the purpose of improving the native stock. The vaccination of horses, mules, and asses against sleeping-sickness was carried out during the period under review. Any outbreaks of diseases in the livestock of both New Providence and the Out Islands received the immediate attention of the Board through the medium of its Veterinary Officer.

#### FISHERIES

The export of crawfish and scale fish under licence has been continued. During 1948 the season was changed from 1st October to 31st March, to 1st October to 15th March. Fifteen purchasing stations were established and thorough inspection of all cargoes was carried out by

local inspectors. The inspection at destination carried out during 1947 was abolished and local inspectors were appointed at each purchasing station during 1948. During 1947 414 tons valued at £57,672 were exported, compared with 704 tons valued at £67,764 during 1948.

The sponge beds were opened to fishing during the latter part of 1946 and 276 cwt. valued at £52,352 were exported during 1947, compared with 129 cwt. valued at £8,543 during 1948. The future outlook for this industry is not encouraging and during the period of approximately eight years, while the beds have been closed, very little improvement has been shown and one of the best varieties, namely Velvet, is now extinct.

Other products exported during the last two years are as follows:

<i>Produce</i>	<i>Quantity</i>		<i>Value</i>	
	1947	1948	1947	1948
Cascarilla Bark .	54,064 lb.	10,883 lb.	£4,390	£511
Small Shell .	—	574 brls.	—	6,366
Conch Shells .	—	18,226 shells	—	436
Turtle Shell .	1,456 lb.	578 lb.	2,755	700
Coconuts .	—	30,200 nuts	—	448

#### CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

There are no co-operative societies other than 17 farmers' associations on the Island of Eleuthera and Cat Island. These associations are assisted by the Board of Agriculture to the extent of advancing seed and fertiliser, etc., for the tomato and other crops. The Board markets the crops and deducts their advances from the proceeds of each consignor until the entire indebtedness is liquidated.

## Chapter 7: Social Services

### EDUCATION

Free education is provided by the Government. The general administration is vested in the Board of Education, consisting of a chairman and four members who are appointed annually by the Governor. The Director of Education is the official adviser to the Board and attends all meetings.

A scheme for the utilisation of certain military buildings at Oakes Field as an Education Centre has been accepted by the Government. Included in this scheme was provision for a technical school, a training college, accommodation for the Government High School and hostels for Out Island students. A start has been made with the technical school and the arrival of staff from the United Kingdom is eagerly awaited.

#### *Primary Education*

Primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of six and 14 years of age, and is provided at public expense. The total amount expended by the Board of Education during 1948 was

£80,715 19s. 6d., giving an average cost per pupil on the total roll for the year of £6 9s. 4½d. The expenditure per child on administration and salaries was £5 6s. od.

At the end of 1948 the Board was maintaining 85 schools and grants-in-aid were being paid to 37 schools. The total number of children attending these schools was 12,756. In addition to schools which are directly under the control of the Board of Education, there are 45 denominational schools with a total roll of over 3,263 pupils and private schools with over 423 pupils. Owing to the scattered population, this relatively large number of schools is not adequate. A number of children are out of the reach of any school, and in some localities attendance at school entails a certain amount of hardship on young children.

In conformity with the agricultural policy of the Government, prominence has been given in all Board schools to agricultural training. This is becoming an outstanding feature of education in the Bahamas. Sewing lessons for girl pupils are given in most schools, two centres for cooking classes for girls and two of woodwork classes for boys have been established in Nassau.

*Staff and Accommodation.* The Board employed 179 teachers (principal and assistant) and, in addition 37 grant-in-aid teachers. The shortage of qualified teachers within the Colony is proving a great handicap to education.

### *Secondary Education*

Secondary education leading to the School Certificate is provided for 127 pupils in the Government High School. There are also five schools maintained by religious bodies which provide secondary education for about 648 pupils. Two of these schools satisfy the conditions laid down in the Secondary Education Act and receive assistance from the Government.

*Government High School.* The Government High School is open to children between the ages of 11 and 18, who can qualify by passing an entrance examination set by the headmaster.

The headmaster and the six teachers possess college degrees. The number of pupils attending in 1947 was 137 and in 1948, 127. The cost of maintaining this school was £7,233 in 1948. The fees are £10 10s. od. per annum. The general standard reached is that of the School Certificate.

*Queen's College.* This school is under the direction of the Methodist Missionary Society. The headmaster, who is a Methodist minister, is appointed from England, although the school is non-sectarian. There are 12 teachers, four of whom have college degrees. In the two years under review there were 335 pupils. Primary and secondary education is provided. The fees are £18 per annum for the primary school and £30 per annum for the secondary school.

*St. Francis Academy.* This school is maintained by the Roman Catholic Church and conducted by the Sisters of Charity of Mount

Saint Vincent of New York, U.S.A. In 1947 and 1948 there were 92 pupils. Primary and secondary education is provided, the standard reached is that of the School Certificate. The fees are £12 10s. od. per annum.

*St. Augustine's College.* St. Augustine's College, a secondary school for boys, was established in January, 1945. It is conducted by priests of the Order of St. Benedict. The College is located four miles east of Nassau in the Fox Hill District. Pupils are prepared for the Cambridge School Certificate Examinations. In 1948 the staff consisted of eight qualified teachers, all with degrees. The fees are £20 0s. od. per annum.

*St. John's College.* St. John's College is the Diocesan secondary school and is managed by a Board of Governors under the chairmanship of the Lord Bishop of Nassau. It is financed by pupils' fees and a Government grant. It was opened in January, 1947, with an enrolment of 135 pupils. The present numbers are 150. The staff consists of the head master and six qualified assistants. The curriculum is based on the syllabus set for the Cambridge Certificate Examinations. The fees are £16 10s. od. per annum.

*St. Andrew's School.* This school was opened in 1948 by a school company with a capital of £10,000, under the direction of a board of directors. There is a head master and four teachers, four of whom are university graduates. The school age at the present is nine to 14, although the aim of the school is to expand and raise the age limit and standard of education to that of School Certificate. The number of pupils on the roll is 30. The fees are £30 to £60 per annum.

### *Training of Teachers*

As it has not been possible to secure the services of the necessary staff for the training college, a modified scheme for teacher-training was started in September. The Training Mistress and the Assistant Inspector visited the student teachers in their schools and gave demonstration and criticism lessons. After these lessons, lectures on methods were given to the whole staff. In 1949 it is planned to broadcast lessons to preparatory schools in the Out Islands and also lectures in history of education, psychology and aims of education. This series of lectures is a preparation for the examination for a Teachers' Certificate.

The Board of Education conducts a summer course for teachers yearly for a period of three weeks. The course is held in Nassau and teachers from all the out-lying islands attend. A Summer School was held in 1947 and 1948 as it has been for many years. The purpose of the Summer School held in Nassau from 19th July to 6th August, 1948, was to help assistants and subordinate teachers in the practical work of teaching. Over 112 head teachers, assistant teachers and subordinate teachers from the Out Islands and 39 teachers from the Nassau schools attended.

### *Domestic Science*

Dundas Civic Centre provides training for 135 pupils in housewifery and cooking, as well as giving instruction in table waiting, etc.

*Miscellaneous*

Under a scheme sponsored by the House of Assembly three teachers from the United Kingdom arrived to take up duties in the Out Islands.

At the present time there are four members of the staff of the Board of Education attending universities or colleges in the United Kingdom, two at St. Andrews, one at Hull and one at Exeter. In addition the holders of two Government Scholarships are at Edinburgh and Belfast.

During the year the results of an educational survey conducted in 1947 were published.

A start has been made with a library of film strips and of 16 mm. films; there are at present 60 film strips and 200 reels of educational films.

The Bahamas Branch of the British Red Cross Society subsidises the provision of milk to 16 schools in Nassau and 41 in the Out Islands.

## HEALTH

The climate of the Colony is most conducive to good health. Pipe-borne purified water, a drainage and sewerage system, ice plant and cold storage are features of the capital, Nassau.

The city water, ice and milk supply are regularly analysed and a high standard of purity maintained. Elsewhere in the Colony, protection of wells from contamination is attempted, though boiling of water is still a necessary precaution.

*Medical*

The Medical and Public Health Service is administered by a Board of Health with the Chief Medical Officer as Adviser.

The special perennial health problems of the Bahamas are tuberculosis, venereal disease and malnutrition; general diseases occur in an average distribution as elsewhere. It is the good fortune of the Bahamas that infectious and epidemic diseases are normally conspicuous by their absence, though a severe outbreak of whooping cough occurred in 1948 affecting all the islands in sequence; 1,336 cases were recorded in New Providence alone.

The Government spent the following on the hospital and public health:

	<i>Hospital</i>	<i>Public Health</i>	<i>Total</i>
	£	£	£
1946 . . . . .	36,737	25,343	62,080
1947 . . . . .	63,844	42,387	106,231
1948 . . . . .	97,500	60,100	157,600

The increase in 1947-48 (particularly 1948) is largely due to the splitting of the hospital by the removal of the general care patients in October, 1947, to the Prospect Hospital (ex-R.A.F.) five miles from Nassau, resulting in duplication of staff, transport, etc., and this will continue till the new hospitals are built. The ex-R.A.F. Hospital now accommodates over 160 patients. In 1946, 308 beds were available, and this was increased to a complement of 350 in both hospitals in 1948. In the General Hospital there are four Resident Medical Officers, a British

Matron, eight sisters and 85 local nurses of whom 68 are in training. In all there is a staff of 225 of all grades. Two more doctors are approved in the estimates but so far have not been obtainable.

Most of the service is free, though a private pavilion caters for the need of private practitioners, £5,958 in 1947 and £7,276 in 1948 being recovered from this and laboratory services, etc. The services rendered by the Hospital are shown in the following table:

		<i>Patients</i>	<i>Treatments</i>	<i>Ambulance Calls</i>	<i>Prescriptions</i>
1946	. .	9,000	17,826	2,615	34,026
1947	. .	9,440	21,824	3,503	37,826
1948	. .	9,935	26,481	4,870	47,014

		<i>Admissions</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Pauper Relief</i>
1946	. .	2,905	409	244	665
1947	. .	3,364	526	256	680
1948	. .	4,145	597	352	686

The Venereal Clinic treated 808 patients in 1947 with 15,617 injections, and 2,202 cases in 1948 with 24,787 injections. The laboratory services (x-ray, bacteriological, etc.) were greatly increased, and the gynaecological and infant welfare work of the Public Health Nursing Service is also increasing.

The average stay in hospital was eight days; the daily cost per patient in 1948 was 15s.; in 1947, 11s.; in 1946, 7s.; in 1944, 5s.; and in 1937, 4s.

It will be noted from the foregoing that not only are greater numbers attending but costs have increased; this latter is partly due to the division of the hospitals. Cases come from all parts of the Colony and 20 to 30 emergency plane calls have been made yearly.

The whooping cough epidemic was largely responsible for an increase in hospital deaths in 1948.

The Out Islands had three District Medical Officers only for most of the two years; there is provision for six, but candidates are not forthcoming. There are eight unqualified practitioners as well, mostly missionary. Ten qualified nurses and 10 midwives are employed at various centres and a great number of midwives who were granted certificates of a much lower standard previously also deal with cases.

The Public Health Nursing Service is under a specially qualified supervisor who, with five graduate nurses, is responsible for three health centres dealing with ante-natal, post-natal, infant and child welfare work. This is associated with a school service, home visits and the notification of any diseases beyond their scope of treatment. Details of the service are as follows:

		<i>Ante-Natal</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Vaccinations</i>	<i>Home Visits</i>
1947	. .	2,245	307	1,114	5,514
1948	. .	3,256	229	—	7,315

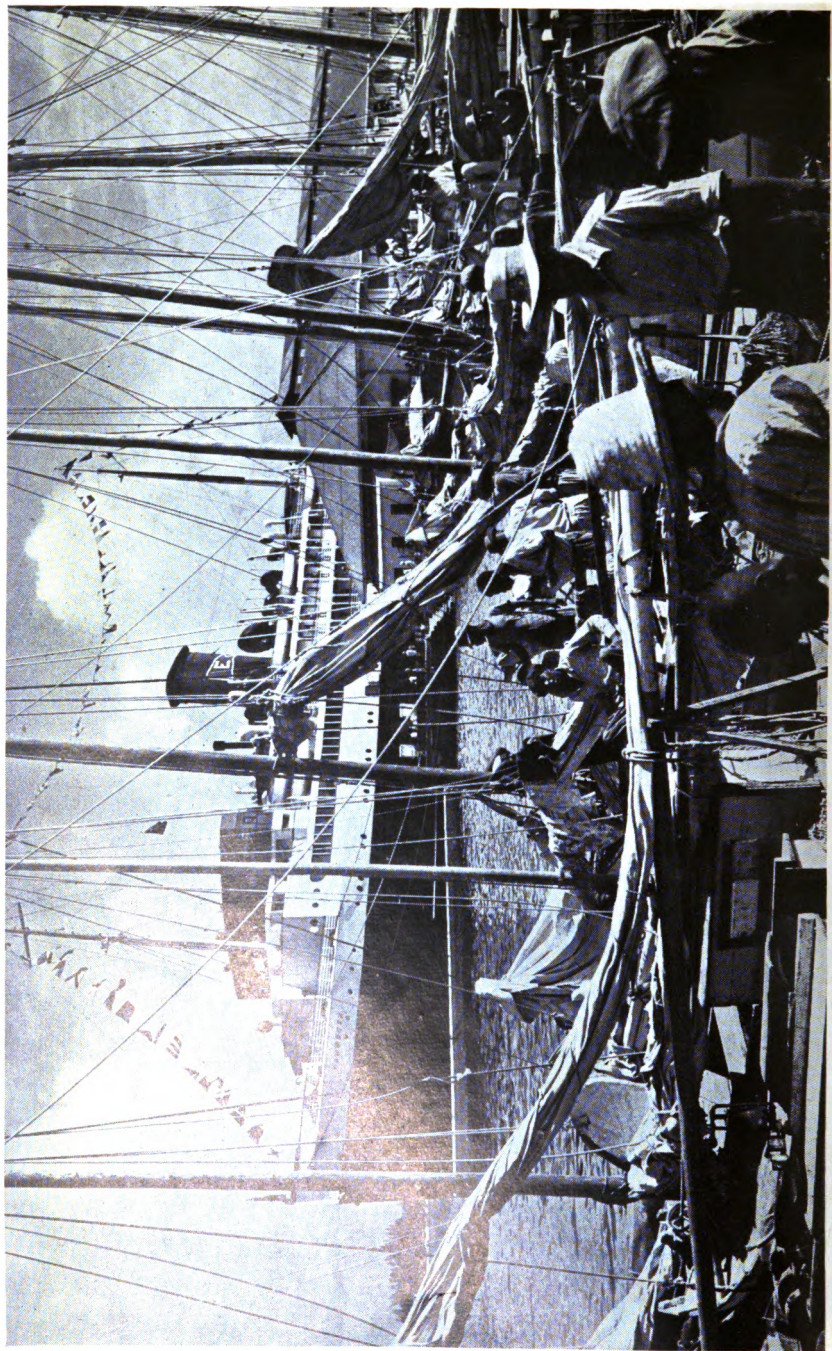
  

		<i>Births</i>	<i>Clinics</i>	<i>Attendance at Clinics</i>	<i>New Cases</i>
1947	. .	1,190	166	10,234	1,276
1948	. .	1,446	168	10,078	1,229

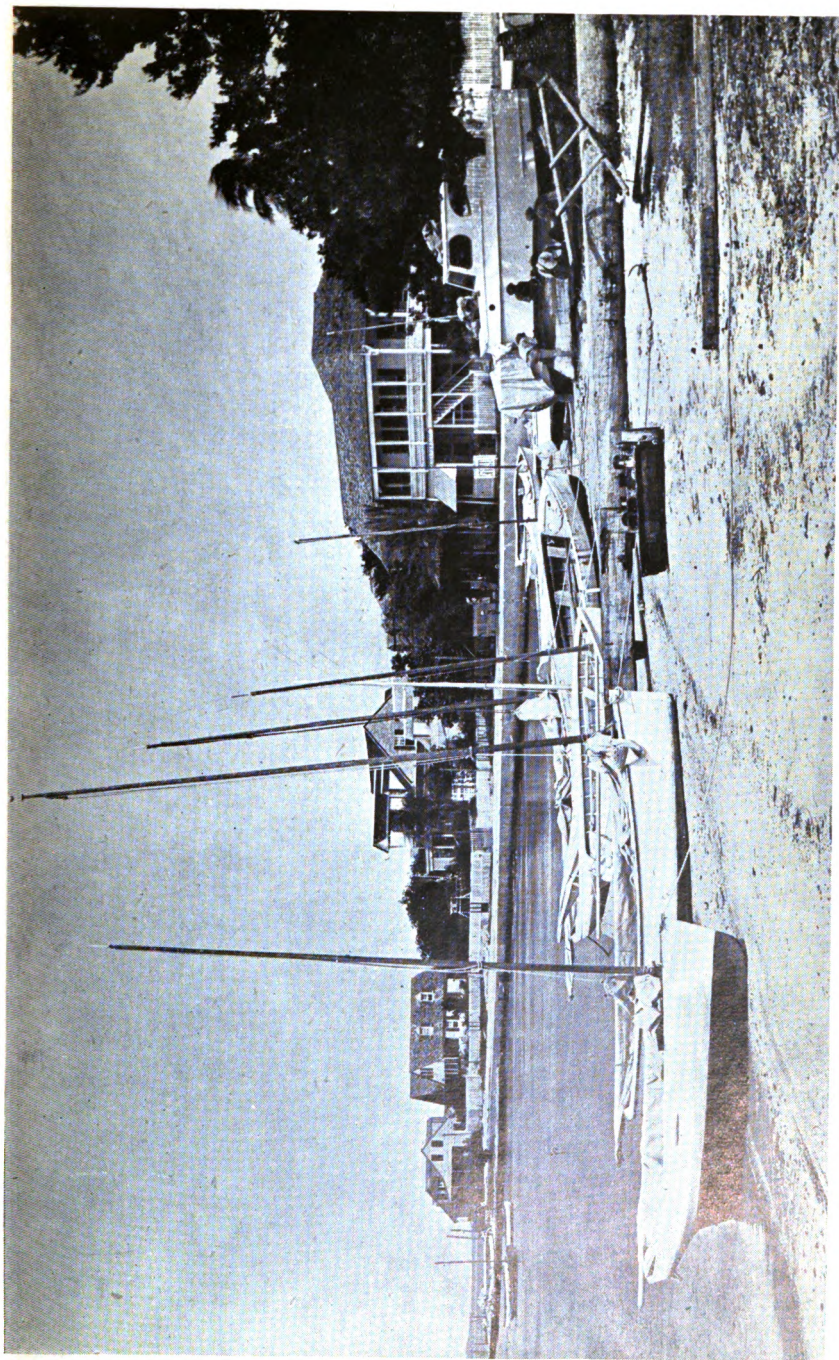


RAWSON SQUARE, IN THE HEART OF NASSAU

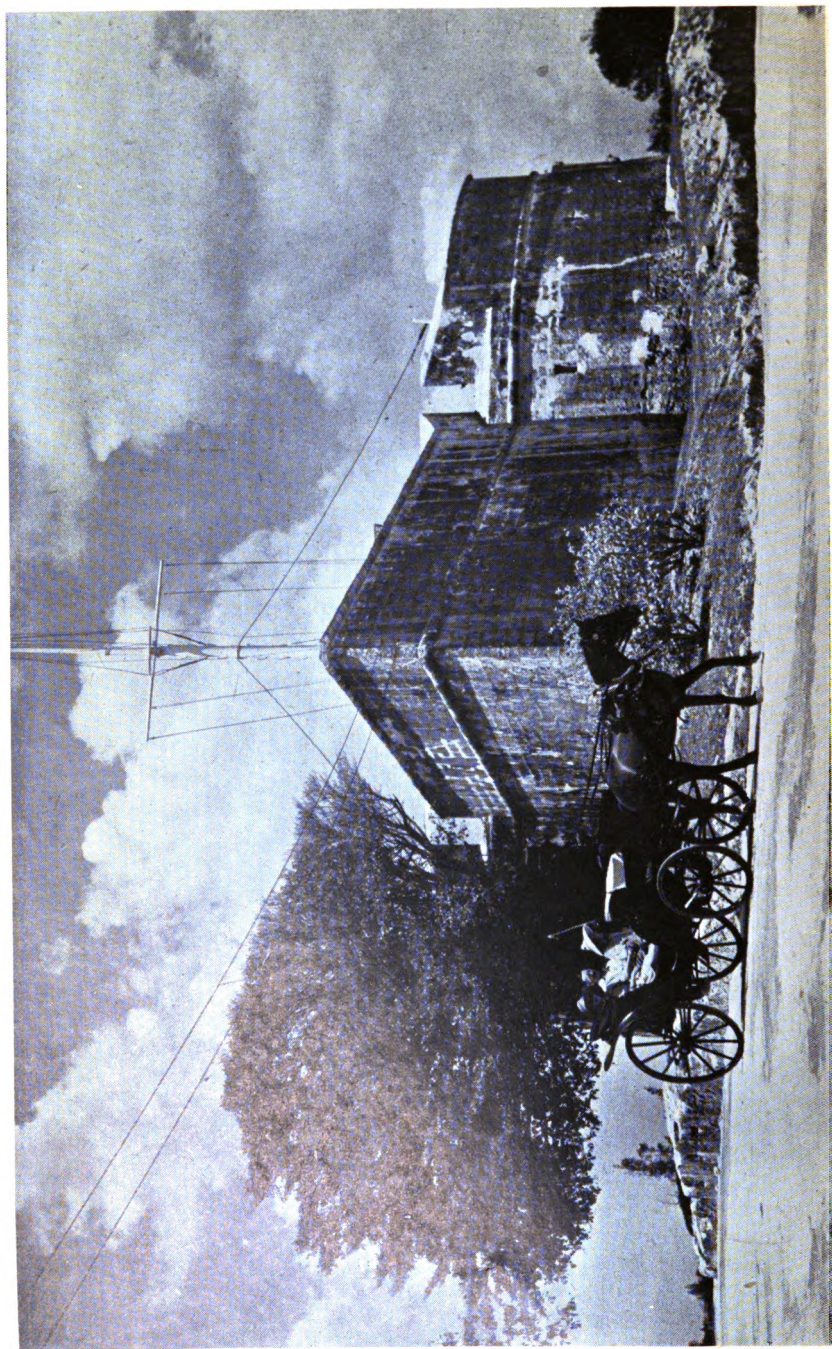
*Top - The Government (Life to right) area - the Colonial Secretary's Office the Post Office and the House of Assembly*



NASSAU WATERFRONT



DUNMORE TOWN, CAPITAL OF HARBOUR ISLAND, ABOUT 50 MILES FROM NASSAU



OLD FORT FINCK CASTLE, ONE OF THREE OLD FORTS SURVIVING AT NASSAU

The Bahamas Red Cross continued its excellent work in the nursing and welfare service, under a welfare officer and three graduate nurses, particularly with home visits and prospective and ex-patients of the hospitals. Certain graduate nurses were also in training for Out Island experience. The milk scheme for schools has effected a very marked improvement in the mental alertness of pupils.

The health of the boys in the Industrial School is supervised by one of the Medical Officers of the hospital, who in addition deals with the Police Force, the prisons and the leper colony.

Population variations in the Out Islands were not so much in evidence during the two years, although the recruitment of labour for agricultural work in the United States of America did cause some fluctuation in the population of the various islands. No epidemic resulted from this movement though three sporadic outbreaks of typhoid were nipped in the bud in the Out Islands by prompt and energetic measures. By a more comprehensive routine inoculation and educational training of both scholars and parents through radio talks and propaganda, it is hoped to bring the incidence of communicable diseases down to a minimum.

But to affect all this the first and foremost necessity is to have an adequate central organisation with sufficient trained staff for hospitals and district nursing, which should extend to the islands in a far more liberal way than at present. This is all envisaged in the plan for the new general and mental hospitals, with tuberculosis and venereal disease in special sections, and the unification of medical and nursing services in the islands as a whole. Progress is being made gradually and 1948 closed on an optimistic note.

### *Sanitation*

The Sanitary Inspector, with an assistant and six sub-sanitary inspectors, carries out the policies determined by the Board of Health. Local Boards of Health in the Out Islands also supervise requisite improvements.

In New Providence (and Nassau in particular) a carefully controlled water supply is checked bacteriologically at regular intervals. Mains are being gradually linked up to houses, but stand pipes are still in use in many sections. The use of old wells is not allowed except for washing purposes. The water-borne "activated sludge" sewerage system functions well, but the increase in housing will necessitate in time a more modern sewage disposal method, which would include the large flat areas of the town where earth closets are still used.

Pasteurised milk only is available and is checked regularly for fat content and bacteria. Meat is examined by the Sanitary Inspector and the sale of food in the public market is checked by a full-time officer. Only licensed premises are allowed to sell food, and food-handlers are examined twice yearly. Hotel staffs are also examined.

Street cleaning and garbage disposal is a Board of Health responsibility; 5,092 truck loads in 1947 and 6,879 in 1948 were handled and disposed of mainly by burning.

Hygiene as a whole is good in New Providence, in spite of an incomplete sanitation programme for certain local sections. Nuisances were less frequent though 167 Health Board Orders were issued in 1947 and 210 in 1948, with three successful prosecutions in the latter.

The mosquito and sandfly problem exists because of the presence of swamps. Breeding places are gradually being eliminated by filling in and drainage, but a more comprehensive treatment of swamps and breeding areas with sprays, powder and fog from planes and power-trucks is contemplated.

#### HOUSING

There has been a marked increase in house building which during the two years was not materially affected by dollar-shortage, though supplies were irregular. Better houses on more modern lines are being built, even in the poorer areas. During the "season" the demand is high and quite fantastic prices are paid for ordinary accommodation. No town-planning committee exists and the result is a series of houses often too closely placed to each other and leaving too narrow roadways, especially those which will eventually be arterial roads.

### Chapter 8: Legislation

Forty-five Acts were passed during 1947 and 48 in 1948. The following deserve special mention:

1947

The Airports Board Act (No. 20 of 1947) gives the Board the same standing as other statutory Boards in the Colony. It defines the position of the Director of Civil Aviation and also places the management and control of all scheduled airports in the Colony under the Board. For the moment, the only scheduled airport is at Oakes Field, Nassau, but doubtless others will be added in the future.

The Children and Young Persons Act (No. 21 of 1947) repeals the Juvenile Offenders Act, 1936 (Ch. 11 of 1936) which Act, as a result of certain amendments in 1941, brought within its scope various classes of children who were not strictly speaking "offenders" and who should not have been so stigmatised. The Act deals with ill-treated and neglected children, and the title "Children and Young Persons Act" frees from any implication of criminality or guilt the persons dealt with under it. It sets up juvenile courts consisting of three members (at least one of whom must be a woman) chosen from a panel and confers upon them exclusive jurisdiction in relevant matters.

The Public Market and Slaughterhouse Act (No. 28 of 1947) places the Nassau Market under the Board of Agriculture instead of the Health Board as formerly and delegates additional powers to the Board of Agriculture.

The Statutory Rules and Orders (Amendment) Act (No. 1 of 1947) requires that all Rules and Orders be laid before both Houses of the Legislature. If within six weeks either House of the Legislature passes a condemnatory resolution in respect of such Rules or Orders they are thereby revoked.

The Telecommunications Act (No. 18 of 1947) places the control of telephones, telegraphs and all forms of radio communication under one Board, known as the Telecommunications Board. It also provides some control over mobile stations, a form of communication which has become increasingly important in recent years.

1948

The General Assembly Elections (Amendment) Act (No. 3 of 1948) makes provision for supplementary revision of voters' lists in every polling division in the Out Islands in the months of April and September of each year. The principal Act provided for annual revisions only, and as a consequence the number of registered voters in the Out Islands has considerably decreased. Provision is also made in the amending Act to extend the polling hours from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The Subsidiary Legislation (Compilation) Act (No. 5 of 1948) and the Statute Law (Revised Edition) Act (No. 4 of 1948) make provision for the compilation of the subsidiary legislation of the Colony, which was last compiled in 1908, and for revision of the laws of the Colony, which were last revised in 1929. Under the Subsidiary Legislation (Compilation) Act His Excellency has appointed His Honour the Chief Justice as Commissioner for the compilation and the Statute Law (Revised Edition) Act appoints the Chief Justice, O. L. Bancroft, K.C., the Attorney General, the Honourable J. S. R. Cole and the Honourable A. K. Solomon, K.C., as Commissioners for the revision of the laws of the Colony.

The Butlin Vacation Village (Grand Bahama) Act (No. 24 of 1948) empowers the Governor in Council to enter into an agreement with Butlin's Bahamas, Limited, for the establishment of a vacation village at Grand Bahama.

The agreement is on the general lines of that existing in respect of the Fort Montagu Beach Hotel, but in addition it grants to the company certain rights concerning its aviation activities and also extends the Race Course Betting Act to Grand Bahama, the only other island in the Colony in which race course betting is allowed. It is anticipated that the Butlin vacation village will earn a large number of dollars.

The Rate of Interest Act (No. 25 of 1948) sets the maximum interest on petty loans, not exceeding £25, at 30 per cent simple interest. Money-lenders in the Colony have been resorting to excessive rates of interest charged on petty loans, some rates having soared as high as 300 per cent, and it is hoped that this Act will act as a deterrent on money-lenders and that the borrowing public will benefit by it.

## Chapter 9: Justice, Police and Prisons

### JUSTICE

#### *Law and Courts*

The law of the Colony is:

(a) The common law of England as it existed at the time of the settlement and subject to the exceptions mentioned in the Declaratory Act (Chapter 7 Statutes, Revised Edition, 1929).

(b) Statutes of the Imperial Parliament specifically applied to the Colony by enactment of the local Legislature.

(c) Statutes of the Colonial Legislature.

There is a Supreme Court of the Colony which sits in Nassau, is presided over by a Chief Justice, and has the jurisdiction of a High Court of England. An appeal, in civil matters, lies from the Supreme Court to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The Supreme Court sits throughout the year as occasion requires, but ordinary sessions are held quarterly for disposal of criminal informations and of civil actions listed for trial by jury.

The principal magisterial court of the Colony is that of the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, who is stationed in Nassau, and appeals from his court lie to the Supreme Court. Magisterial powers are also exercised by Commissioners in charge of Districts in the Out Islands, and by Justices of the Peace, and appeals from such courts lie to the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, who goes on circuit from time to time among the Out Islands, to hear such appeals and dispose of cases triable only, in original jurisdiction, by a Circuit Justice. The Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate, Commissioners, and, where so empowered, Justices of the Peace are also responsible for the conduct in court of preliminary inquiries into indictable offences triable by the Supreme Court.

Payment of fines by instalments is permitted in suitable cases, but the necessity seldom arises. The Penal Code provides for placing offenders on probation, and there is one probation officer.

The main types of civil cases are those for money lent, rentals and damages; while the criminal cases chiefly consist of charges of wounding, burglary, house-breaking, stealing, the use of obscene language, and unruly behaviour.

### *Prevalence of Crime*

The following table shows the number of cases dealt with by the Stipendiary and Circuit Magistrate and in the Supreme Court for the past three years:

<i>Magistrate's Court</i>			<i>Supreme Court</i>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil Cases</i>	<i>Criminal Cases</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil Cases</i>	<i>Criminal Cases</i>
1946 . .	1,770	1,484	1946 . .	89	113
1947 . .	1,518	1,137	1947 . .	127	88
1948 . .	1,845	1,457	1948 . .	178	128

The decreasing trend in criminal cases before the Magistrate's Court, referred to in the report for 1946, was continued in 1947 and reversed in 1948. From the table shown above it would appear that although the introduction of a policy of severe sentences in 1947, even in somewhat minor cases, may have acted as a deterrent in that year, the number of criminal cases heard in the Supreme Court for the year 1948 has surpassed all previous years. In two of the three cases in which murder was charged in 1947, the persons were found guilty and, in due course,

executed. In the third case the prisoner was found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment with hard labour.

In 1948 there were four cases in which murder was charged. In these cases, two persons were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death and two were found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to seven and 15 years' imprisonment respectively.

There was a notable increase in the number of civil cases in the Supreme Court. It is thought that this reflects the rising prosperity of the Colony and is related to the high wages and salaries now being paid in all trades and occupations. An examination of the register of writs issued in civil causes shows a marked increase in the number of claims on promissory notes and for goods sold and delivered.

### *Juvenile Delinquency and Probation Services*

The fact that most indictable offences are committed by persons of ages averaging from 18 to 25 years shows the lack of proper services in the Colony to cope with juvenile delinquency. The Children and Young Persons Act, 1947 came into force on 18th September, 1947. A Juvenile Court has been set up in Nassau, but it is too early to express any opinion on its effects upon juvenile delinquency. The question of setting up juvenile courts in the Out Islands is under consideration.

The Industrial School, to which juvenile offenders are committed, does not appear to serve the purposes for which it is intended, and a general reorganisation of this institution is now engaging the attention of the Government.

### POLICE

The Bahamas Police was established by an Act of Legislature in 1864. The present authorised establishment of the Force is six officers and 200 other ranks.

The headquarters are in Nassau, a few constables only being stationed on the Out Islands from time to time. The Out Islands generally are policed by a force of local and district constables under the Out Island Commissioners.

The Bahamas Police is a semi-military force, there being no imperial troops or defence force in the Colony. It is equipped with rifles and automatic weapons and trained as a rifle company. All ceremonial parades, guards and sentries are provided by the Force. A band of 18 instruments is maintained.

For civil police duties the Force is organised into headquarters and street duty divisions with a separate Criminal Investigation Department. It is equipped with a Motor Transport Section consisting of 11 vehicles, four of which are equipped with two-way radio telephone, and the C.I.D. has a well-equipped Photographic and Finger Print section.

The town area, divided into beats, is constantly and regularly patrolled from four police stations and the rural areas from two sub-stations.

The Force is also the Fire Brigade for New Providence and is equipped with nine motor fire engines, all personnel of the Force being trained as firemen.

The officers of the Force are appointed from the Colonial Police Service and the other ranks are recruited locally from the various Bahama Islands as far as is possible and from Barbados and British Guiana when local recruiting falls short. Individual men from Trinidad and Jamaica, who were living in Nassau, have also been enlisted.

#### PRISONS

The main prison in Nassau has accommodation for 117 male and 19 female prisoners. There is a prison farm at Fox Hill for first offenders. It can accommodate 72 male prisoners in dormitories.

Work was commenced in the latter part of 1946 on a new prison at Fox Hill to accommodate 64 male prisoners of the recidivist or habitual criminal type. Little progress had been made up to the end of 1947 owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining materials from England, especially steel. In 1948 the Government decided to convert the recidivist prison into the main prison with accommodation for 224 male and 30 female prisoners, together with the necessary ancillary buildings and staff quarters. The present main prison in Nassau will be abandoned as a prison; it is too small and its situation in the midst of a built-up area is unsatisfactory for many reasons. Plans and estimates for the new undertaking have been prepared and are at present under consideration by the Legislature.

Juvenile male prisoners are accommodated at the Industrial School, half a mile distant from the first offenders' prison at Fox Hill, until they reach the age of 16. The age limit was reduced from 18 to 16 in 1948. A Visiting Committee is responsible for the control and management of this school and effort is made to teach agriculture and other crafts in conjunction with elementary schooling. Ninety-two boys up to the age of 18, attended the school in 1947 and 71 up to the age of 16 in 1948.

There are small prisons or "lock-ups" on all Out Islands, which are under the supervision of the respective Commissioners. Prisoners sentenced to terms exceeding three months are transferred to Nassau.

The health of prisoners during the year was uniformly good, there being no epidemics or infectious diseases.

The daily average number of prisoners in the Nassau prisons during 1947 was 214 and during 1948, 258.

## Chapter 10: Public Utilities and Public Works

#### ELECTRICITY

The largest supply system in the Colony is in the island of New Providence and is owned and operated by the Government.

A supply was first given in 1908 from a small direct-current plant in the town of Nassau, driven by gas engines from a producer gas plant. In 1922 the system was completely reorganised, the old direct-current plant being replaced with diesel-driven alternators, supplying the system of

2,300 volts high tension and 200 or 115 volts low tension. As this plant was purchased from America the frequency adopted was 60 cycles.

The growth of the system continued rapidly and in 1937 a loan was raised to establish a new power station some two miles outside the town, as it was evident that the original power station site could not provide sufficient room for future expansion.

The first installations at the new site were completed in 1939, a small diesel-driven alternator being installed for peak load purposes. This was followed in 1941 with the installation of a 1,100 h.p. supercharged diesel alternator set, and a further two sets of the same capacity were installed during 1946 and 1947.

To complete the process of eliminating the old power station and to meet the rapidly increasing departmental commitments, four new units totalling some 7,200 h.p. are to be installed in the near future.

The generating voltage at the new power station is 6,900 volts and all the new high-voltage feeders are at this voltage, the high-voltage distribution in the town, however, remains at 2,300 volts. If development of the eastern and western ends of the island continues, it may be necessary to instal additional transmission lines at 22,000 volts to provide a suitable supply.

Electricity rates are amongst the lowest in the West Indies, although some increases in charges are being made to meet the continuing increase of fuel, labour and material costs.

Altogether, the undertaking has some 50 miles of underground high-tension and low-tension networks, and some 130 miles of overhead high-tension and low-tension feeders. The number of consumers connected at the end of 1948 was 4,988, the units generated during that year being 13,288,940.

An extensive programme of expansion and reconstruction is in hand, an important aspect of the latter being the replacement of much of the present overhead system by underground networks. Some twenty years of experience with underground cables has shown that local conditions are not unfavourable to their use. The elimination of as much as possible of the overhead system is thought to be a good investment against the probably extensive and costly damage which may be caused by hurricanes or similar tropical disturbances experienced in this area.

Several of the Out Islands have small privately owned generating plants which provide a limited supply for the general public. The larger undertakings are generally equipped with diesel-driven alternators, generating at American standard low voltages and frequency.

#### WATERWORKS

The original source of the supply of fresh water at Blue Hills became practically exhausted several years ago. The average salinity of the water being produced at the end of 1948 in this area was rather high for ordinary domestic users, but by mixing it with the fresher water obtained from the other stations, the salinity was reduced. The stations at Prospect and the Grove were enlarged to great advantage, and the system at Perpalls improved considerably. These stations are from four to five

miles west of the Blue Hills station, and are operated by small electrical pumps and windmills. During the day the water from these systems is chlorinated and pumped to the reservoirs at Fort Fincastle. At night, when there is a surplus, water is pumped to the storage tanks at Blue Hills, where it is mixed with the water of higher salinity, purified and then pumped to the main reservoirs at Fort Fincastle. The result is that water of good quality and of a moderate salinity is normally supplied to the city and suburban areas.

The expansion of the various residential districts and the large number of new houses have increased the demand for supplies and the consumption has increased from 63 million gallons in 1934 to 240 million gallons in 1948.

All ground water on the island is the accumulation of excess rainfall, and extreme care must be exercised in pumping so as not to upset the hydrostatic balance between this layer of fresh water, and the underlying sea-water in the rock. For this reason the amount of production over a given area has been carefully designed, and pumping is by means of a series of small pumps with suctions submerged only a few feet in the water, no single well yielding more than 150 gallons per hour. The results have been reasonably satisfactory and the salinity of the present wells remains fairly constant.

In view of these conditions the Public Board of Works exercises stringent control over the consumption of city water, limiting its use to domestic and industrial purposes, with certain restrictions. It is not allowed for the watering of lawns and gardens and prohibited for the flushing of sanitary fixtures in houses where there are a number of such units. The rates have been revised also with a view to discouraging waste and unnecessary use of this water. These measures are essential if the supply is to remain of moderate salinity, otherwise its indiscriminate use would possibly result in depletion of the areas producing fresh water. In the meanwhile investigations are being carried out over other areas, which might also produce fresh water, in order to take care of additional supplies, when this becomes necessary. The linking of the former R.A.F. water supply at the Windsor Airfield, 12 miles outside the city, to the existing system is scheduled for 1949-50.

#### SEWERAGE

The Public Board of Works regulates the sanitary arrangements of all new buildings and buildings which are extensively renovated. Whenever these buildings are located in an area serviced by the sewerage system, it is compulsory that all fixtures be connected to the city sewers. The inspection of work done by private plumbers is enforced, to ensure that all work carried out is according to the most modern methods of sanitation.

All sewers empty into a main reception tank at Malcolm's Park from which the raw sewage is pumped to the tanks at the sewerage plant on Potters' Cay. This plant is of the "activated sludge" type. The crude sewage is broken up, screened and activated so that in its final stages all objectionable odours are eliminated. While the expenses of operating

this plant are not covered by the sewerage rates, from the standpoint of public health it is extremely profitable.

Whenever possible, extensions of the city sewers are made in streets or private subdivisions formerly not serviced. Work is carried out continuously in reconditioning the sewer mains and pumps, and recently improvements were made at the main station to facilitate the handling of the increasing amount of sewage, due to the growth of the township in general, and the extension of sewers in areas where formerly there was no proper sanitation. In such districts, owners are requested to condemn septic tanks and latrines and connect their properties direct to the sewerage system. This ensures the proper disposal of sewage, and the results have been very gratifying.

#### BROADCASTING

The Broadcasting Station in Nassau, ZNS, is still operating on its clear channel frequency of 1540 kc/s. This frequency has proved satisfactory and the fact that the Colony has clear channel rights to it under the North American Regional Broadcasting Agreement has resulted in a minimum of interference from other stations.

The number of community radios in the Out Islands for the benefit of the public has been increased during the year. These receivers are usually installed in the public schoolhouse or some other suitable place and are used primarily for receiving ZNS. Special programmes for the benefit of the Out Islands are put on by ZNS. It is hoped that broadcasting in general will be improved in the near future.

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The maintenance, superintendence and control of all public works on the island of New Providence is under the direction of the Public Works Department, which carries out its duties on behalf of the Public Board of Works. This Board consists of a chairman and four other members appointed annually by the Governor. Two members of the Board are also members of the House of Assembly, not holding any office under the Crown or in the public service. All funds for public works are granted annually to the Board by the Legislature.

Public works on the Out Islands are controlled by the Out Island and Economic Investigation Committee, work being carried out under the direction of the Chief Out Island Commissioner. A local Public Board of Works at each settlement or township also assists in directing the works to the best advantage. The Public Works Department gives technical advice where necessary and if requested by the Committee carries out certain specific work for them on the various Out Islands.

The following are the public works carried out by the Department:

##### *Waterworks*

Recovery, distribution, maintenance, extension and improvement of plant, and administration of all matters connected with the entire water supply system.

*Sewerage*

Collection, disposal, maintenance, extension and improvement of plant.

*Public Buildings*

The Board is responsible for the maintenance of Government House and the main public buildings. At the present time the main administrative buildings are inadequate. Plans have been made for the renovation and remodelling of the Secretariat, which is now being carried out and will be completed early in 1949. Various proposals have also been formulated for the other buildings, as in most cases extensions will be necessary. At the present time no decisions have been made, so that it is not probable that any improvements to these buildings will be made before 1949 or 1950. New police stations are to be built in the Southern and Eastern Districts, and there is every indication that work on these will be started in 1949.

*Private Buildings*

The Board exercises control over the construction, location, architecture and planning (including remodelling and renovating) of all buildings in certain zones, as authorised by the Buildings Regulations Act. This prevents any faulty or dangerous construction, any insanitary measures or any overcrowding of houses and ensures that no buildings are erected which are not in conformity with the local style of architecture, which is predominantly Georgian. The results which have been achieved are remarkable, and the large number of houses built in recent years still contribute to the old-world charm and picturesqueness of Nassau. Frequent inspections are made to make sure that there is adequate and proper sanitation, and that wherever possible arrangements are made for private supplies of water, including storage of rain water, which may be used for all domestic purposes other than for drinking, thus conserving the supply of purified and chlorinated water as much as possible.

By the Buildings Restrictions Order (under the Defence Regulations Act) the amount which may be spent in the construction of a new building both in New Providence and the Out Islands is limited and revised as conditions warrant. In consequence, building materials have been available to all classes, resulting in the building of an unusually large number of residences for persons of moderate means, and for the poorer classes as well, together with houses, of a comfortable yet medium size, for wealthier members of the Colony.

*Roads*

All public roads, sidewalks and abutments in New Providence are vested in the Board, which also controls their building and maintenance. The Board also exercises its right in ensuring that no awnings or signs are erected over the streets or sidewalks which might be dangerous to the public. The Board also regulates the type of such signs, and all neon or ultra-modern electric flashing signs are prohibited, with the result that the business district with its older type of signs, still retains its quaintness and old-fashioned atmosphere. Bill posting is also prohibited.

The Traffic Committee, which comprises the Chairman of the Public Board of Works, the Director of Public Works, the Commissioner of Police, and another member appointed annually by the Governor, make rules dealing with the direction of traffic, location of parking places, etc. Recently all main roads in the city proper have been made "one way" streets, thus alleviating traffic congestion considerably.

Roads have proper drainage both by surface drains and underground storm sewers. Even after the heaviest tropical showers the streets are free of water in a very short time after the rain has stopped. These drains are kept open and clean at all times, thus eliminating the hazard of mosquito breeding or foul odours.

### *Parks and Recreation Grounds*

All parks and public places including recreation grounds are carefully supervised and are at all times clean and free from weeds or rubbish. Shade trees planted and cultivated by the Public Works Department form a restful shade from the heat of the sun, and the planting of annuals and flowering shrubs add to their attractiveness. A nursery is maintained for supplying these trees and shrubs and the surplus is sold to the public at reasonable prices so as to assist persons of moderate means in improving their gardens.

### *Forts*

The old historic forts of Nassau are preserved in their original setting.

### *Cemeteries*

The Board controls all cemeteries which are maintained from public funds. Burials are regulated and the proper spacing and depth of graves is supervised.

### *Royal Air Force Cemetery*

The Royal Air Force Cemetery was built in 1943 by the combined efforts of the U.S. Post Engineers (who maintained the two O.T.U. airfields built under Lend-Lease) and the R.A.F. Unit stationed in Nassau. Since 1945 the cemetery has been maintained by the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, a women's civic organisation, which provides funds for its upkeep augmented by a grant from the Imperial War Graves Commission and donations from next of kin. The names of 112 airmen of the United Nations who lost their lives while on duty in the Bahamas appear on a memorial plaque (inside the lych-gate), while 53 hardwood crosses mark the graves of those who were laid to rest in this cemetery. The grounds are planted with shade trees and flowering tropical shrubs, and are well maintained.

### *Fire Wells and Fire Wharves*

The Board has constructed a number of wells on the shoulders of the roads in low areas which are used by the Fire Department for fighting fires. These wells give an adequate supply of water and can supply several engines at one time if necessary. They have been very satisfactory, not only in saving drinking water, but in providing an ample

supply of water close to the residential areas in cases of fire. Along the water-front there are several wharves from which the fire-engines may pump sea-water for fire-fighting purposes. These wharves are kept in good condition and are also used by the local or inter-insular boats for landing purposes.

### *Subdivisions*

During recent years the growth of the residential areas has been phenomenal. Private enterprise has been responsible for the construction of roads and clearing of lots in these districts. The Board, under the Private Roads Act, exercises its powers to make certain that such developments and subdivisions have roads suitable for motor traffic and that building lots sold in these localities are of a reasonable size to avoid overcrowding of houses, also that persons building homes in these subdivisions are provided with public utilities.

### *Lighthouses*

There are 41 automatic flashing acetylene navigational lights operated by the Board. These lights are maintained and serviced by the Public Works Department, and new ones are erected by them when necessary. These lights are mainly for the benefit of local or Out Island navigation, although many of them are visible from the main steamship routes and are used by offshore shipping. They are unattended, being serviced only once a year (except in cases where they become extinguished) and are therefore classed in the Admiralty List of Lights as such.

Formerly 37 oil-lights were maintained by the Board, and were attended by keepers. Recently the control of these oil-lights was handed over to the Out Island Department, as it was much easier and more economical for the local Commissioner to supervise the maintenance, in as much as these lights were near settlements on the Out Islands.

## Chapter II: Communications

### SHIPPING

During 1947 and 1948, ships of the Canadian National Steamship Line performed regular freight services from Halifax during the winter months, and from Montreal during the summer to Nassau, bringing 13,661 and 13,393 tons of cargo respectively. A large percentage of the Colony's imports and exports was transported by locally owned vessels ranging in size from approximately 300 to 80 tons net. These vessels plied between Nassau and Miami, Florida, to which latter port freight for the Bahamas was carried by rail from various parts of the United States of America. A number of vessels registered in the Bahamas were engaged in transporting bananas from Cuba and other West Indian islands to Miami, Florida. A regular freight service between England and this port was performed by steamers of the Royal Mail Line in 1947 and 1948, and in addition a freight service by steamers of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, Liverpool, was inaugurated in 1948. In both 1947 and 1948,

a freight service between Jacksonville, Florida, and this port was maintained by motor vessels of the Florida Caribbean Line.

Due to the continued stringency of the United States wireless requirements for passenger-carrying vessels, transportation of passengers by local vessels, which was abandoned some years ago, was not resumed, and passengers arriving in and departing from the Colony were transported by Pan American Airways, British South American Airways, and S.S. *Yarmouth* and S.S. *Evangeline* of the Eastern Steamship Line, Boston, Massachusetts.

On 31st October, 1948, a regular passenger service by M.S. *Reina del Pacifico* of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company between this port and Liverpool, England, was resumed. This service was in operation prior to the outbreak of war, and its resumption should prove of great convenience to the Colony. During 1947, the S.S. *New Northland* was operated by the Seaway Steamship Line on ten-day cruises from Jacksonville, Florida, calling at Nassau *en route* to Cuba and Haiti.

The R.M.S. *Mauretania* made five calls at Nassau during the winter of 1948 in a series of cruises between New York and South America, and in December of the same year the S.S. *Veendam* included Nassau in her cruise itinerary.

The only port in the Colony other than Nassau at which there was shipping activity of any consequence was at Inagua, where ships called for the purpose of taking salt exports principally to Canada. The number of ships calling at Inagua was 233 aggregating a total of 82,392 net tons in 1947, and 228 aggregating 79,264 net tons in 1948. The total number of ships entered and cleared at ports within the Colony was 3,768 with a total tonnage of 267,854 in 1947, and 3,637 with a total tonnage of 1,053,121 in 1948.

#### RAILWAYS

There are no railways in the Colony.

#### ROADS

All main roads and the majority of the secondary roads in Nassau are asphalted. The Public Works Department has for years been following the practice of asphaltting all roads, whether main or secondary, when they are rebuilt. Consequently all roads are gradually being paved with asphalt. Maintenance and repair crews are kept at work on these roads throughout the year, thus ensuring their good condition.

A recent survey showed the following mileage of the roads on New Providence, practically all of which may be used by motor traffic:

Type	Public	Private	Total
Asphalted . . .	111 miles	7 miles	118 miles
Macadamized . . .	27 "	5 "	32 "
Unimproved Earth . .	20 "	22 "	42 "
Totals	<u>158 miles</u>	<u>34 miles</u>	<u>192 miles</u>

## VEHICLES

The following vehicles were registered in the Colony at the end of 1948:

Motor Cars . . . . .	1,487
Taxi Cabs . . . . .	100
Buses . . . . .	6
Trucks . . . . .	590
Motor Cycles . . . . .	82
Bicycles . . . . .	5,780
Horse-drawn Cabs . . . . .	36
Horse-drawn Drays . . . . .	27
Total	<hr/> 8,108 <hr/>

## CIVIL AVIATION

On 1st January, 1947, the Civil Aviation Department became an independent self-accounting department and an annual appropriation was granted based on the estimates of revenue and expenditure submitted for 1947 during the previous year. The estimates of expenditure covered personal emoluments, cost of maintenance of runways and roads within the airport area, maintenance of power lines and runway and taxiway lighting, etc. The Department was divided into sections comprising administration, which includes the supervision of all flying within the Bahamas, licences of personnel and registration of aircraft, accountancy, air traffic control, tower control and airport maintenance which includes upkeep of motor transport and buildings.

The work, begun in 1946 to convert a building taken over from the R.A.F. to a suitable temporary terminal, continued during 1947 and was finally completed in November. During this period of reconstruction, the terminal building was used by all aircraft, scheduled, non-scheduled and private, except those of Pan American Airways which remained in the building occupied by them during the war years. To meet the requirements of increased traffic, the tarmac in front of the terminal was extended in 1947 and taxiways to the runway inter-section widened and additional taxiway lights installed in the new area. In 1948 the tarmac area was further extended and the passenger accommodation in the building was also improved. A new parking area for cars and taxis was constructed in front of the airport terminal building.

In 1947, 25,524 passengers arrived by air at Oakes Airport in comparison with 12,332 passengers who arrived at Nassau by sea; in 1948 these figures were 21,942 and 15,769.

In addition to this international traffic, the two local companies, Bahamas Airways and Nassau Aviation consistently operated scheduled and non-scheduled flights to the Out Islands of the Colony.

On 1st January, 1947, the airport commenced operating on a continuous 24-hour basis and at this time the control staff consisted of a chief control officer, senior controller and four assistant controllers. The

control tower provided a full 24-hour service and air traffic control operated on a dawn to dusk basis.

Considerable improvements in the aeronautical communications system were made in conjunction with the Telecommunications Department which provided and installed new equipment. Up to date V.H.F. equipment was installed in the control tower operating on recommended frequencies for the Caribbean, the air to ground R/T and W/T circuits were increased and improved to accord with recommended I.C.A.O. practice, and the point to point circuits were also revised to meet changing conditions.

When the International Civil Aviation Organisation procedures came into force on 15th April, 1948, for aeronautical telecommunications and air traffic control, the standard Caribbean air to ground voice and C/W frequencies were adopted. On the same date the Government officially absorbed the Pan American Airways signals section in the Bahamas which was incorporated in the main telecommunications signals section at Oakes Airport. The signals facilities of Pan American Airways which were transferred also included the high-power radio beacon installation situated at the eastern end of the airport. Towards the end of 1948, this installation was re-sited at the main transmitting station of the Telecommunications Department. In May, 1948, the medium-power radio-range installation on New Providence formerly operated by the U.S. Air Force was finally purchased from the U.S. Foreign Liquidation Commission.

The two main scheduled airlines flying to Nassau during 1947 were British South American Airways and Pan American Airways. Pan American Airways continued to operate daily services between Miami and Nassau. The first flight of B.S.A.A. from England to Nassau was made on 17th January. On 5th June, B.S.A.A. inaugurated a new weekly service from England to Nassau and Jamaica via Bermuda with York and Lancastrian aircraft. In August this route was extended to Havana and operated by Tudor IV aircraft. Towards the end of 1947, a local registered company, Bahamas Airways Limited, was granted scheduled rights to operate a service—Miami—Cat Cay—Nassau. The service commenced on 20th December when bi-weekly flights were made with a PBY-5A aircraft and continued throughout the season until April, 1948. On 16th August, 1948, B.S.A.A. commenced scheduled operations between Nassau and Miami. In December, 1948, Trans-Canada Airlines commenced twice-weekly scheduled flights between Montreal, Toronto and Nassau.

Towards the end of 1948, the two local registered companies, Bahamas Airways and Nassau Aviation, both of which operate flights to the Out Islands of the Colony, were absorbed by British interests. Bahamas Airways was purchased by British South American Airways on 9th September, and on 30th September Nassau Aviation was purchased by Butlin (Bahamas) Limited.

In addition to scheduled operation, in 1947 Winged Cargo Incorporated, as a contract carrier, operated frequent services during the season

between Nassau and Philadelphia. This company, together with Nationwide Air Transport, was employed for returning labourers from the United States to the Bahamas. Numerous other non-scheduled and private flights were made during the years 1947 and 1948 from points in the U.S.A. and different islands in the Caribbean. During 1947 the total number of aircraft movements was 2,672 and in 1948 the number was 2,829.

At the close of 1948 there were eight aircraft on the Aircraft Register and 14 Bahamas "B" Pilots' Licences and seven Bahamas "A" Licences had been issued.

Airport revenue for the years 1947 and 1948 is summarised below:

	1947			1948		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Landing Fees . . . .	10,597	9	9	9,829	9	11
Parking Aircraft . . . .	418	2	6	754	11	11
Hangar Fees . . . .	1,092	8	6	3,211	12	3
Rental of Buildings . . . .	1,837	16	10	1,221	17	11
Aviation Fuel Charges . . . .	1,542	2	7	2,397	10	5
Miscellaneous . . . .	864	0	3	113	0	11
Total	£16,352	0	5	£17,528	3	4

#### POSTS

Revenue derived from the sale of stamps during 1947 was £6,286 less than in 1946. The larger sales in 1946 were chiefly due, however, to the issue in that year of postage stamps in commemoration of Peace and Reconstruction. The figures of stamp sales for 1948 are not yet available.

Two sets of Bahamian commemorative stamps were issued in 1948, one in commemoration of the tercentenary of the landing at Eleuthera of the Eleutherian Adventurers depicting life and industries in the Bahamas, and the other in commemoration of Their Majesties' Silver Wedding. The former set was placed on sale on 11th October and its sale is expected to continue until the end of 1949, and the sale of the latter commenced on 1st December and the issue will be withdrawn on 28th February, 1949. It is expected that the 1948 revenue derived from the sale of stamps will be increased considerably by the sale of these special commemorative issues.

During the period under review fortnightly mail services by motor vessels were maintained between the capital city of Nassau and the majority of the Out Islands, but the services to the more remote islands were performed at less frequent intervals. Air mails were also despatched weekly to four of the larger settlements on the island of Eleuthera.

In August, 1948, the Legislature passed an Inter Insular Mails Act which requires a weekly mail service to most of the Out Islands, and it is hoped that the entire Out Island mail service will be greatly improved during 1949.

Surface mails were forwarded from Nassau to Miami, Florida, U.S.A., bi-weekly and to New York as opportunity occurred. Air mails were despatched to Miami daily (except Sundays) and on Mondays twice daily. In addition air mails were despatched to Great Britain and Bermuda bi-weekly and to Jamaica tri-weekly.

#### TELEPHONES

Two hundred additional lines from the city exchange were made available to the public in 1947; all were connected immediately, leaving a waiting list of over 100 applications. During 1948, a manual C.B. switchboard was installed, primarily for departmental telephones. The need for telephone facilities of some sort was so pressing that 60-odd extensions from this switchboard were made available to the public. Equipment for 400 additional lines has been promised for delivery in August, 1949, and until this equipment is received further expansion in the city area is impossible. There are now over 200 applications on hand.

Equipment for 50 lines in the eastern satellite exchange was received late in 1947 and practically all of these have been connected.

Outstanding orders for exchange telephone equipment cover 400 lines for the city, 150 lines for east, and 50 lines for west; in addition, orders for underground cable, conduits, etc., have been placed and deliveries are promised for early 1949. When this equipment is received, all applications will be fulfilled with a fair surplus of equipment at each exchange.

A number of PBX's and house telephone systems were installed in business offices, but the demand is still greater than the supply. Some cables for underground distribution were received in late 1948 and it is hoped to begin laying these in early 1949.

#### RADIO-TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH

Early in 1948, a new radio-telephone circuit to Miami was installed. This enabled the Department to meet the heavy demands for radio-telephone service during the tourist season. A radio-telephone circuit to Jamaica was established in 1948.

A marine radio-telephone circuit was installed at Bimini. The addition of this marine telephone service gives greater coverage over the whole area of the Bahama Islands and offers radio-telephone facilities to the large number of anglers who visit this island. The Bahamas now has marine telephone service at Nassau, Inagua, Cat Cay and Bimini.

Over 100 Bahamian registered boats are licensed with frequencies for these four marine channels and in addition several boats of foreign registry are fitted with these frequencies.

Several Out Islands were fitted with radio-telephone facilities during 1947-48, and it is hoped later to instal V.H.F. equipment at the islands nearest to Nassau. A number of privately owned islands were linked with Nassau by radio-telephone. A V.H.F. radio system for the Police enabling their cars to keep in touch with headquarters was installed during 1948.

Both radio-telephone and radio-telegraph facilities with the Out Islands have been improved.

The frequency shift radio teleprinter circuit with Miami which was installed in 1946 has proved very satisfactory and it is hoped at a later date to instal a duplex system on this circuit.

Telecommunications facilities at Oakes Field Civil Airport have been extended, including the installation of a Radio Beacon and facilities for the automatic reception of meteorological data.

#### GENERAL

During 1948, an annexe to the Administrative Telecommunications Building was constructed. This building now has a floor area of approximately 95,000 sq. feet. It is hoped that this will prove adequate for some years to come.

## Chapter 12: General

The Lerner Marine Laboratory, under the auspices of the American Museum of Natural History, was opened by His Excellency the Governor on 29th March, 1948. This valuable institution provides not only an Aquarium in which scientists and members of the public can see many of the Colony's fish population in their natural habitat, but offers scientists facilities and accommodation to carry out research in all types of marine biology.

## PART III

### Chapter 1: Geography and Climate

#### GEOGRAPHY

THE Bahamas are an archipelago of islands, cays and rocks, lying between  $20^{\circ} 50'$  and  $27^{\circ} 25'$  north latitude and  $72^{\circ} 37'$  and  $80^{\circ} 32'$  west longitude, and extending from Inagua on the south to Matanilla Reef on the north, from Mayaguana and its adjacent rocks and cays on the east to and including the Cay Sal Bank on the west, and are separated from Florida, to the west, by the Straits of Florida, and from Cuba, to the south, by the Old Bahama and Nicholas channels. Extending over an area of 760 miles, the Bahamas comprise nearly 700 islands and over 2,000 cays and rocks. The aggregate land surface of the group is  $4,375\frac{1}{2}$  square miles, which is slightly less than that of Jamaica, the largest of the British West Indian islands.

New Providence, although not one of the larger islands, is the most important, as it contains the capital, Nassau, which is the chief port, and is inhabited by more than one-quarter of the total population of the Colony. The island is about 21 miles in length from east to west, and 7 miles in breadth from north to south.

The population of the Bahamas taken from the last census (1943) set out in individual islands, is as follows:

Abaco and Cays . . . . .	3,461
Acklins Island . . . . .	1,744
Andros Island . . . . .	6,718
Berry Islands . . . . .	403
Biminis . . . . .	718
Cat Island . . . . .	3,870
Cay Lobos . . . . .	7
Crooked Island . . . . .	1,078
Eleuthera . . . . .	6,430
Exuma and Cays . . . . .	3,784
Grand Bahama . . . . .	2,333
Harbour Island . . . . .	769
Inagua . . . . .	890
Long Cay . . . . .	101
Long Island . . . . .	4,564
Mayaguana . . . . .	591
New Providence . . . . .	29,391
Ragged Island and Cays . . . . .	417
Rum Cay . . . . .	219
San Salvador (or Watlings Island) . . . . .	693
Spanish Wells . . . . .	665

## CLIMATE

The winter climate of the Bahamas is most delightful. Frost is unknown, the average temperature is about 70° F., the rainfall is slight, and cool breezes prevail. The rainy months are May, June, September and October. The total rainfall for 1947 was 51·67 inches and for 1948 was 43·49 inches.

The greatest heat is experienced during July, August and September, the temperature ranging from 80° to 90° F. The islands are never unhealthy and the malaria mosquito is unknown in the Colony.

## Chapter 2: History

At the time when the Bahamas were first discovered, that is to say in 1492, they were inhabited by a race of Indians who were removed to Haiti by the Spaniards to work in the mines. A few stone implements are occasionally found, but, apart from this, there is no trace of the aboriginal inhabitants. The Spaniards made no attempt to colonise the islands, which remained uninhabited until about the year 1629, when they were included in a Royal Grant, from which date they were visited from time to time by settlers from Bermuda. Earlier than that, namely in 1578, they were already regarded as part of the British domains. In 1647, a Company of "Eleutherian Adventurers" was formed in London for the purpose of colonising the islands, which were granted by Parliament to the Company despite the earlier Royal Grant. In 1670, yet a third grant was made by Charles II, vesting the islands in six Lords Proprietors.

Two years after the grant of the third charter the first governor was appointed by the Lords Proprietors. He and his successors found it extremely difficult to cope with the buccaneers, who at this time were the virtual rulers of the country. In 1673, one governor was seized and deported to Jamaica; in 1690, another was deposed and imprisoned; and it seems that the only governors who escaped trouble were those who left the inhabitants to do as they pleased. In addition to internal troubles the governors appointed by the Lords Proprietors had to deal with invasion. In 1680, the Spaniards destroyed the settlement and carried off the governor to Cuba. In 1703, a combined force of French and Spaniards destroyed Nassau and carried off the negro slaves, most of the white inhabitants fleeing to Carolina. The new governor, who arrived in 1704, found New Providence totally uninhabited, and returned to England.

Within a few years, however, Nassau was re-established as the headquarters of the pirates in West Indian waters, and so great were the depredations of these pirates that the British Government found it necessary to send out a governor to control the Colony and drive the pirates from their stronghold. This governor, Captain Woodes Rogers, arrived in Nassau in 1718, and in December of that year eight of the leading pirates were executed and the others compelled to give up their

nefarious trade. A period of comparative quiet followed. In 1776, however, a fleet belonging to the rebellious American Colonies captured the town of Nassau and carried off the governor, but after a few days the place was evacuated. Five years later a Spanish force took possession of Nassau and left a garrison, but in 1783 the Spaniards were driven out by a British expedition.

The subsequent history of the Bahamas is comparatively uneventful. The final abolition of slavery in 1838 caused an economic and social change; the outbreak of civil war in the United States led to a period of considerable prosperity in the Colony, which, between the years 1861 and 1865, became a depot for vessels running the "blockade" imposed against the Confederate States.

### Chapter 3: Administration

The present constitution of the Bahamas is similar to those of the North American Colonies prior to the War of Independence. The Government is modelled upon that of England in the early days, the Governor representing the Sovereign, and the nominated Legislative Council and the elected House of Assembly representing respectively the Houses of Lords and Commons.

"The Eleutherian Adventurers", who came to the Bahamas from Bermuda after the Parliamentary grant of 1647, brought with them a conception of representative government already established in Bermuda, and the affairs of the infant settlement were managed by a Governor, a Council, and an elected Senate. The Charter of 1670 to the Lords Proprietors provided for an elected House of Assembly, and the constitution, much as it exists today, was finally settled in 1729, when the Crown assumed direct control of the Colony. The Bahamas enjoy representative, though not responsible, government. The Executive Government is in the hands of a Governor, appointed by the Crown, who has the power of veto, and is advised by an Executive Council. Various executive powers and the right to enact certain subsidiary legislation are vested by law in the Governor in Council.

The Legislative Council, consisting of nine members nominated by the Crown, was created as a separate Council by Royal Letters Patent in 1841.

The House of Assembly is composed of 29 members elected for 15 districts. The qualification for members is possession of real or personal property to the value of £200. A member must also be a male British subject who has attained the age of 21 years and have been ordinarily resident in the Colony for the preceding three years. The Out Islands seldom return a member of their own community, the 21 representatives being generally inhabitants of New Providence. The qualification for electors is ownership of land to the value of £5 or the occupation of houses of annual rental value of £2 8s. in New Providence, or half that amount in the Out Islands. Women have no vote. The normal life of the

House is seven years, but it may be dissolved at any time by the Governor, as occurred in June, 1928, and in May, 1935. No forms of local government exist.

## Chapter 4: Weights and Measures

By the Weights and Measures Act (Chapter 172) weights and measures are fixed at the standard of those used in England previous to the introduction of imperial weights and measures. Imperial weights and measures are used, however, in the collection of duties on imports.

## Chapter 5: Newspapers and Periodicals

The following newspapers are published in the Colony:

The *Nassau Guardian*, published daily.  
 The *Nassau Daily Tribune*, published daily.  
 The *Voice*, published weekly.  
 The *Herald*, published weekly.

No periodicals are published in the Colony.

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WAKEFIELD, A. J. *Report on Agricultural Development in the Bahamas*. Nassau, 1942.

*Bahamas: General Descriptive Report on the Bahama Islands*; in which is included the Annual Report for 1902. Cd. 1985, 1904.

*Historic Forts of Nassau*. Nassau, 1932.

*Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into disturbances in the Bahamas which took place in June, 1942*. Nassau, 1942.

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*Laws*. Revised edition, Vols. 1 and 2. Annual volumes for years subsequent to 1928.

Single copies of *Acts*.

*Rules, Regulations and Orders-in-Council*.

*Blue Books*.

*Official Gazette*.

*Departmental Reports*.

*Census, 1943*.

*Law Finder: A Guide to Legislation in force in the Bahama Islands*.

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COLONIAL OFFICE

# REPORT ON THE BAHAMAS FOR THE YEAR 1949

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## Contents

	PAGE
PART I    Review of 1949 . . . . .	3
PART II    CHAPTER 1    Population . . . . .	7
CHAPTER 2    Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation . . . . .	8
CHAPTER 3    Public Finance and Taxation . . . . .	11
CHAPTER 4    Currency and Banking . . . . .	15
CHAPTER 5    Commerce . . . . .	15
CHAPTER 6    Production . . . . .	18
CHAPTER 7    Social Services . . . . .	20
CHAPTER 8    Legislation . . . . .	25
CHAPTER 9    Justice, Police and Prisons . . . . .	26
CHAPTER 10    Public Utilities and Public Works . . . . .	29
CHAPTER 11    Communications . . . . .	36
PART III    CHAPTER 1    Geography and Climate . . . . .	41
CHAPTER 2    History . . . . .	42
CHAPTER 3    Administration . . . . .	43
CHAPTER 4    Weights and Measures . . . . .	44
CHAPTER 5    Newspapers and Periodicals . . . . .	44
CHAPTER 6    Reading List . . . . .	44
MAP . . . . .	<i>At end</i>

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LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1950

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**The cover illustration shows Nassau Waterfront**

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## PART I

### Review of 1949

#### GENERAL

THE year 1949 presented the Colony, as a part of the sterling area, with problems which in many directions and in various degrees of urgency could be diagnosed as dollar deficiency diseases. As the Colony had set itself in previous years on a course of dollar earning and dollar conservation, so during the year it sought to develop its tourist industry, its main source of income and of dollar exchange, and measures were taken to prevent dollar leakage, to switch from dollar to sterling sources for supplies, and to increase local production of agricultural products.

The Colony was a ready field for investment, and construction began on the Butlin Vacation Village at West End, Grand Bahama, which planned to open its doors to American tourists in January, 1950.

The revaluation of sterling on 18th September was an event that created repercussions on the Government and business life of the Colony. Not all the repercussions were adverse, however; for example, the newly valued dollar was so nearly equivalent to its black market predecessor that the problems bound up with smuggling and other illicit operations ceased to play any further significant part in the operation of exchange control. Nevertheless, in a Colony which pre-war had to all intents and purposes a dual currency with dollars and sterling circulating side by side, and which, in spite of substantial efforts after the war, relied to a very great extent on dollar importations, the result of the new sterling/dollar exchange rate was inevitably a rise in the cost of living. The hardships were particularly felt by civil servants and others on fixed incomes. Members of the Civil Service, notwithstanding that the recommendations of the Burns Report in respect of their emoluments and conditions of service were not implemented by the Legislature, continued to serve the Colony with a high standard of loyalty and efficiency. In retrospect, therefore, the devaluation of the pound was the outstanding event in a year which included also a change of Governorship, a hurricane, and a general election.

#### REVALUATION

That the community adjusted itself to the new circumstances in which devaluation placed it, and accepted without serious repercussions the hardships involved, was largely due to the resilience of a people that have met more than one disastrous turn of fate in their long history. The business community accepted and helped to work a system of price control which particularly benefited people in the lower income ranges.

The arrival of plentiful supplies of Australian meat, coupled with a control on local fish which had never proved effective before, were important in holding down the cost-of-living index. Between 19th September and 31st December the cost-of-living index, based on the budget of the wage earner earning up to £5 a week, rose no more than 7 per cent.

The rise in prices sent up the level of wages, and, on the recommendations of the Government, the Legislature set the lead for employers generally throughout the Colony by introducing revaluation allowances for civil servants and pensioners on a sliding scale, giving at the base to the labourer class a 15 per cent increase of wages and at the top one of 7½ per cent. Employers followed suit, in some cases awarding considerably higher wage increases.

Merchants, hoteliers and others concerned with tourism realised that the new dollar rate offered an opportunity to the Colony to bring more visitors from the dollar area and to expand the Colony's main business.

#### CHANGE OF GOVERNORSHIP

Sir William Murphy left the Bahamas on 21st July at the conclusion of his period of office, and the Colonial Secretary, Mr. F. A. Evans, acted as Governor until the end of the year. The announcement that His Majesty had approved the appointment of Sir George Ritchie Sandford, K.B.E., C.M.G., Administrator to the East Africa High Commission, as Governor-designate was made in the Colony on 17th November.\*

#### GENERAL ELECTION

The Governor prorogued the Legislature on 30th May and issued a writ for a general election on the expiry of the seven years' life of the House of Assembly. As heretofore, the community entered in to the preliminaries of an election with the canvassing of Out Islands and promotion of various partisan interests with energy and close personal interest. Predictions that the election days would be marred with rowdiness, breaches of the peace and other unfortunate repercussions were not proved true in the event. While there were some surprises, the election as a whole was carried through without incident and polling was orderly. There were two convictions in the Supreme Court for election offences, and summonses were issued in connection with the Crooked Island election on 28th December.

The Honourable Asa Pritchard was re-elected Speaker, and Mr. A. R. Braynen was elected Deputy Speaker, after His Excellency the Governor had opened the Legislature on 14th July. Thirteen new representatives were elected to the House of Assembly. The Honourable G. W. K. Roberts assumed the Government leadership; the other members of the House, who are also members of the Executive Council, are the Honourable F. H. Christie and the Honourable R. T. Symonette, the latter being appointed on 14th July.

---

\* Sir George Sandford died suddenly on 17th September, 1950.

## TOURIST INDUSTRY

Some expansion of the tourist capacity of the Colony was achieved, notably by the construction of the Balmoral Club in Nassau by the 21st Century Corporation ; and although the Butlin Vacation Village was not opened during the year, it became a focus of interest as chalet blocks to house 500 visitors and the ancillary buildings neared completion. The Fort Montagu Beach Hotel leased by Mr. W. Butlin kept its doors open during the summer months. The Development Board considered plans for the lengthening of the tourist season in 1950.

## SEA AND AIR COMMUNICATIONS

The R.M.S. *Mauretania* visited Nassau during the earlier months, but there was widespread disappointment that the cruises by the Eastern Steamship Line were not continued during the year. Plans for the construction of a vessel designed essentially as the Colony's sea link with the mainland of America did not materialise.

The Colony, however, was well served by its main air carrier, Pan American Airways ; and British South American Airways, whose main Caribbean maintenance base was moved to Oakes Field, established a link with Miami during the year. Trans-Canada Airways brought an increasing number of Canadian visitors. Work has advanced on the air strips at West End, Grand Bahama. Oakes Airport, under the direction of Wing Commander Coleman, the Director of Civil Aviation, expanded and improved the facilities it had to offer and assumed, in the course of the year, the status of a high grade civil airport, much work being done on the runways and buildings established there by the Royal Air Force during the war. The total air movements for 1949 of 6,619 aircraft was a record. Air traffic control continued to function smoothly notwithstanding greatly increased calls on its staff and on that of the meteorological service from aircraft traversing or landing within the Colony.

## GUIDED MISSILE STATIONS

Negotiations proceeded between the United Kingdom and United States Governments for the establishment in the Colony of guided missile stations, functioning as units of the Joint Long Range Proving Ground based at Cocoa, Florida.

## NAVAL VISITS

H.M.S. *Bigbury Bay* visited the Colony on 10th March for one day. H.M.S. *Sparrow* visited the Colony between 26th November and 9th December and conveyed the Acting Governor and the Attorney General on a tour of the Out Islands which included Andros, San Salvador, Rum Cay, Abaco and Grand Bahama.

In addition a number of United States naval vessels called at Nassau during the year and the committee under the chairmanship of the Inspector of Imperial Lighthouses provided entertainment and recreation for ships' personnel on the high standard that seafarers have come to associate with Nassau.

## HURRICANE

Between 26th and 27th August a hurricane, the maximum velocity of which reached 100 m.p.h. in some of the islands, passed over Nassau, recorded winds being about 75 m.p.h. Damage generally was confined to orchards and farms. The greatest losses were amongst the fruit growers of Northern Eleuthera and to a certain extent in New Providence.

## IMPORTANT VISITORS

The Colony was honoured by a visit between 3rd and 5th October by the Right Honourable Lord Listowel, Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, who, apart from meetings and discussions in Nassau, toured Eleuthera from Rock Sound to Hatchet Bay by car. Fifty members of the chamber of Commerce of Fort Worth, Texas, visited New Providence on 5th November and were entertained and shown the island's possibilities as a holiday resort.

## PART II

### Chapter I: Population

THE estimated population for 1949 was 78,275, made up of 37,006 males and 41,269 females. This is an increase of 1,655 over 1948, of which 831 were males and 824 females.

There were 2,777 births in the Colony during the year or 40.3 per 1,000 based on the 1943 census figures. There were 1,183 deaths in the Colony during the year or 17.1 per 1,000 based on the 1943 census figures. There were 195 deaths of children under one year or 73.6 per 1,000 live births.

There were 663 marriages in the Colony during the year. The marriages were performed by Marriage Officers of the following denominations :

Anglican	....	....	....	....	116
Roman Catholic	....	....	....	....	58
Methodist	....	....	....	....	168
Baptist	....	....	....	....	233
Others	....	....	....	....	88

#### *Total Passengers arriving in the Colony*

1949	....	37,574
1948	....	37,741
1947	....	37,856
1946	....	19,968
1945	....	8,328

Of the above totals, the following were ordinary residents of the Colony :

1949	....	5,433
1948	....	2,973
1947	....	7,168
1946	....	4,398
1945	....	4,670

#### *Nationality Percentages*

Year			U.S.A.	Canada	U.K.	Others
1946	.	.	80 %	4%	5%	11%
1947	.	.	80 %	5%	5%	10%
1948	.	.	80 %	7%	3%	10%
1949	.	.	78 %	9%	3%	10%

## Chapter 2: Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation

### INDUSTRIES

The principal industry of the Colony is the tourist industry. Post-war conditions brought a demand for accommodation which existing hotels and boarding houses were unable to fill, and there was as a result considerable activity in providing more accommodation. Several major apartment house projects were carried out in Nassau and opened their doors to tourists in the winter of 1949-50. The major enterprise in this sphere is the Butlin Vacation Village in Grand Bahama, designed to provide accommodation, on the lines made famous by Mr. Butlin in the United Kingdom, for American visitors in the middle-income brackets for a minimum of a six-month season. Accommodation for 500 visitors will be completed by February, 1950.

Other industries are the lumber industry and salt production by West India Chemicals in Inagua. There were considerable developments in the former, particularly in Grand Bahama, where kiln-drying has been introduced and production considerably stepped up. The possibility of pit-prop and pulp-wood production has been explored. West India Chemicals, Ltd., increased salt production during the period, and are considering beginning operations with magnesite plant.

The tomato industry in the 1949-50 season did not prove as successful as was anticipated, due to competition from Mexico, Texas and Jamaica. The Government is directing itself to improving marketing and distributing methods.

Crawfishing provided employment for a large number of seamen during the fishing season, and the trade was a considerable dollar earner.

Native straw-work and shell-work continued in full operation, and there were good sales locally as well as exports.

The sponge industry has not recovered from the marine disease that devastated the sponge beds in 1939, and this and the sisal industry are for the time being in abeyance. A marine survey during the year gave indications of some encouraging regeneration of certain species of sponge, and interest in artificial cultivation has been stimulated. Although one of the best varieties, namely velvet, is now said to be extinct, there are signs that the sponge industry is capable of ultimate revival.

The recruitment of Bahamians for agricultural work in the United States provided employment for some 2,000 unskilled labourers during 1948 and 1949. Consequently no general unemployment problem arose.

The following table shows approximately how workers were employed :

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Unskilled Labourers . . . .	1,800	400	2,200
Semi-skilled Labourers . . . .	1,600	200	1,800
Carpenters . . . . .	600		600
Masons . . . . .	300		300
Painters . . . . .	300		300
Mechanics . . . . .	120		120
Fishermen . . . . .	400		400
<b>Totals</b>	<b>5,120</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>5,720</b>

A substantial additional number of unskilled labourers, male and female, obtained casual employment in seasonal occupations or were engaged in peasant farming.

#### WAGES

In certain industries wages are regulated by Orders in Council made under the Minimum Wage Act of 1936, but the increased cost of living in the Colony—the index is the highest in the West Indies—has accelerated the increase of wages far beyond the minimum in every employment. For example, the unskilled labourer's daily wage, which was 2s. just over a decade ago, has risen to 9s. to 11s. per day.

The following range of wages for an 8-hour day (overtime  $1\frac{1}{2}$  times) in the various occupations, trades and enterprises is based on the ability of the individual worker :

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
	1949 8 hour day	
Unskilled . . . . .	9s. to 11s.	4s. 6d. to 5s. 9d.
Semi-skilled . . . . .	15s. to 20s.	
Craftswomen :		
Shell-work . . . . .		10s. to 16s.
Straw-work . . . . .		8s. to 12s.
Carpenters . . . . .	30s. to 50s.	
Masons . . . . .	30s. to 50s.	
Painters . . . . .	25s. to 40s.	
Mechanics . . . . .	20s. to 40s.	

In not a few instances employment of both skilled and unskilled labour is not continuous, and unskilled male labourers often receive 5s. to 8s. per day for casual employment. Cooks and housemaids and general domestic help are paid from 30s. to 80s. per week according to hours of employment and arrangement with employers.

#### COST OF LIVING

The cost of living in New Providence is extremely high. During the winter season the tariff in first-class hotels varies from £4 5s. to £10 per day (inclusive) and in the smaller hotels from £1 15s. to £4

per day (inclusive). During May to November, rooms may be obtained in the smaller hotels for approximately £1 5s. per day. A furnished house costs from about £360 to £600 a year. It is estimated that, to live in New Providence in reasonable comfort, it would cost a man, excluding rent, if single £600 a year, if married without children £1,000 a year, and if married with two children £1,200 a year. In the Out Islands there are a few boarding houses, but suitable bungalows would be difficult to obtain.

The labourer's staple articles of diet are flour, fish, hominy, meal, sugar, and occasionally meat, the cost of all of which has risen. (For exemptions from duty on staple foodstuffs see Chapter 3). He can obtain lodging for about 20s. to 40s. per week compared with 4s. per week in 1936. He is saved the cost of educating his children or providing medical treatment as both these are provided free by the Government.

The cost-of-living index on 1st January, 1950, was 331 as compared with 311 in January, 1949, and 323 in January, 1948, the figures being based on 100 in September, 1939. The weighted system is used in assessing the cost of living.

#### LEGISLATION

The principal laws and regulations in force are :

- The Minimum Wage Act, 1936
- The Employment of Children Prohibition Act, 1938
- Employment of Young Persons Act, 1939
- Recruitment of Workers Act, 1939
- Trade Unions Act, 1943
- Workmen's Compensation Act, 1943
- The Labour Board Act, 1946
- Children & Young Persons Act, 1947

#### TRADE UNIONS

There were in 1948 four trade unions in the Colony namely, the Bahamas Trades & Labour Union, the Bahamas Taxi-Cab Union, the Bahamas Plumbers Union and the Bahamas Typographical Union with a total membership of 261. These unions have all been organised in New Providence since 1946 and are duly registered under the provisions of the Trade Unions Act. In 1949 a new union, the Bahamas Musicians Union, with a membership of 72, was organised and registered.

#### LABOUR DISPUTES

There were no labour disputes during the year. The Labour Board Act of 1946 provided for the establishment of a Labour Board to act as a conciliatory body in regulating employer-employee relations. The Board reports and makes recommendations to the Governor-in-Council.

## LABOUR OFFICE

There is no permanent Labour Department, but a temporary office has been in existence since 1943 to organise and supervise the recruitment of labourers for agricultural work in the United States and to operate an accounting system in respect of compulsory deductions from workers' earnings for the support of their dependants. An idea of the scope of the work involved may be obtained from the fact that wage deductions in 1949 totalled \$546,000.

The staff of the Labour Office consists of a Labour Officer, a full-time Liaison Officer, a part-time Liaison Officer and 11 temporary clerks.

## Chapter 3: Public Finance and Taxation

The totals of revenue and expenditure for the last five years are as follows :

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	£	£
1944 . . .	671,397	625,744
1945 . . .	607,972	704,504
1946 . . .	823,604	839,292
1947 . . .	1,352,782	1,112,521
1948 . . .	1,360,226	1,317,621

The actual excess of revenue over expenditure for this period was £216,299.

The authorised Public Debt on 31st December, 1948, amounted to £245,000, which represented a loan of £150,000 raised by sale of debentures issued under the Hotel Loan Act, 1924, £35,000 raised in November, 1936, for installing a new telephone system, £25,000 in respect of an additional Telephone Loan, 1937, and £35,000 for new electrical plant raised in 1937. All these loans were raised locally. Provision is made for the redemption of these loans by annual contributions from the revenue to sinking funds, which on 31st December, 1948, stood as follows (market value of the securities) :

	£
Hotel Loan, 1924 Redemption Fund . . .	99,527
Telephone Loan, 1936 " " . . .	32,843
Telephone Loan, 1937 " " . . .	17,815
Electricity Loan, 1937 " " . . .	25,021
Total held for repayment	<u>£175,206</u>

The chief liquid assets of the Colony consist of surplus fund investments in England in trustee securities bearing interest at approximately 2½ per cent, and amounting at the end of the financial year, 1948, to £101,991 (market value), cash (local and Crown Agents)

£438,026, together with a loan of £250,000 (free of interest) to His Majesty's Government. Other principal assets are represented by the Golf Course Fund, £33,200, and the Government Property (P.W.D.) Fund, £26,760. Recoverable advances of £62,959 were offset by a liability of £44,449 in respect of deposits. The uninvested cash liability on account of the Post Office Savings Bank stood at £8,511 on 31st December, while other liabilities consisted of Bahamas War Savings Certificates and Stamps, £28,122, and an amount of £3,600 held for repayment of war loan debentures which had not yet been presented for redemption.

Apart from real property tax, and a probate duty of 2 per cent on personalty, there is no direct taxation in the Colony. The revenue is mainly derived from the following sources :

	1948 £	1947 £	1946 £
Customs . . . . .	802,001	774,546	483,804
Port, wharf and harbour dues . . . . .	31,372	32,364	31,398
Licences & internal revenue . . . . .	79,615	44,289	22,143
Real property tax . . . . .	14,274	13,240	13,929
Fees of court or office, etc. . . . .	112,114	102,135	68,793
Post Office revenue . . . . .	110,152	47,532	54,304
Interest . . . . .	8,629	8,259	6,754
Electric power receipts . . . . .	101,182	85,905	73,856
Telegraphs and telephones . . . . .	72,791	62,763	56,233
Civil airport fees . . . . .	18,193	16,406	1,829

There are no excise duties in the Colony. Stamp duties are imposed on instruments used in civil proceedings in the Supreme Court or in commercial or other transactions, and are based on the value of the transaction. The Stamp Amendment Act, 1936, levies a tax of 2d. on all cheques.

Expenditure under main heads for the years 1946-48 was :

<i>Head</i>	1948 £	1947 £	1946 £
1. Public Debt . . . . .	20,769	19,664	23,378
2. Pensions and Gratuities . . . . .	23,031	21,669	19,022
3. Legislative Council . . . . .	477	631	657
4. House of Assembly . . . . .	4,667	6,528	3,779
5. Governor and Staff . . . . .	7,090	7,145	4,421
6. Secretariat . . . . .	4,087	3,222	3,015
7. Treasury Department . . . . .	3,661	2,746	2,725
8. Customs Department . . . . .	16,510	11,171	8,929
8a. Immigration Department . . . . .	1,856	1,129	917
9. Judicial . . . . .	5,434	6,563	3,609
10. Legal Department . . . . .	1,704	1,548	1,860
11. Registrar General . . . . .	2,181	2,013	1,757
12. Police Department . . . . .	58,123	52,636	44,037

## PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION

13

<i>Head</i>	1948 £	1947 £	1946 £
12a. Police Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	1,059
13. Fire Department . . . .	1,834	1,629	3,332
13a. Fire Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	—
14. Prison Department . . . .	23,043	26,889	15,156
14a. Prison Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	3,651
15. Audit Department . . . .	1,758	1,481	1,478
16. Post Office . . . .	66,004	35,382	46,059
16a. Post Office, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	93
17. Telecommunications Dept. . . .	57,777	60,637	40,317
17a. Telecommunications Dept., Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	8,727
18. Libraries . . . .	2,047	2,060	1,571
19. Education . . . .	58,304	63,747	40,070
19a. Education, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	11,798
20. Port and Marine . . . .	17,585	27,634	24,802
20a. Port and Marine, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	7,419
21. Medical Department . . . .	136,484	90,900	57,723
21a. Medical Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	5,138
22. General Clerical Staff . . . .	28,736	27,299	25,087
23. Public Works Department . . . .	10,217	9,863	9,364
24. Public Works, Recurrent, New Providence . . . .	36,052	33,742	29,724
25. Public Works, Recurrent, Out Islands . . . .	13,679	10,735	7,962
26. Public Works, Non-recurrent, New Providence . . . .	79,211	23,003	10,332
27. Public Works, Non-recurrent, Out Islands . . . .	57,820	10,243	5,888
28. Agricultural and Marine Products Board . . . .	12,885	12,357	10,272
28a. Agricultural and Marine Products Board, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	—
29. Development Board . . . .	71,257	50,801	34,732
30. Electrical Department . . . .	65,608	64,334	39,704
30a. Electrical Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	7,009
31. Labour Office . . . .	7,917	5,224	4,321
32. Out Island Department . . . .	16,459	46,305	12,687
32a. Out Island Department, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	17,367
33. Water and Sewerage . . . .	27,236	50,354	15,345

Head	1948 £	1947 £	1946 £
33a. Water and Sewerage, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	6,628
34. Miscellaneous . . . .	314,697	273,475	89,243
34a. Miscellaneous, Non-recurrent . . . .	—	—	94,289
35. Industrial School . . . .	6,617	5,787	5,521
36. Civil Aviation . . . .	30,527	33,287	24,193
37. Immigration (see 8a) . . . .	—	—	—
38. Controls . . . .	6,502	—	—

Note: All non-recurrent "a" heads were included under main heads in 1947.

Final figures of revenue and expenditure for 1949 are not yet available, but the estimated figures are as follows:

Revenue . . . .	£1,330,000
Expenditure . . . .	£1,500,000

#### CUSTOMS TARIFF

Flour, rice, tinned milk, brown sugar, salt beef, salt pork, and raw coffee are admitted to the Colony duty free when of Commonwealth origin; other staple foodstuffs pay a low specific duty and are exempted from emergency tax. The duty payable on these items is listed below:

Flour . . . .	1s. per 100 lb. bag, preference 100 per cent
Rice . . . .	1s. per 100 lb. bag, preference 100 per cent
Milk (condensed) . . . .	10 per cent., preference 100 per cent
Milk (evaporated) . . . .	20 per cent., preference 50 per cent
Sugar (brown) . . . .	1s. 3d. per 100 lb., preference 50 per cent
Sugar (white) . . . .	3s. per 100 lb., preference 50 per cent
Salt Beef . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 100 per cent
Salt Pork . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 100 per cent
Raw Coffee . . . .	1d. per lb., preference 100 per cent, 5 per cent war tax
Tea . . . .	6d. per lb., preference 50 per cent, 5 per cent war tax
Grits and Corn Meal . . . .	1s. 6d. per 98 lb., preference 25 per cent
Pure Lard . . . .	3s. 4d. per lb., preference 50 per cent
Potatoes . . . .	2s. per 100 lb., preference 50 per cent

The general *ad valorem* duty is 20 per cent plus an emergency tax of 5 per cent *ad valorem*.

Spirits and tobacco are taxed specifically at relatively high rates. Gasoline and oils pay specific duties with an additional sales tax on gasoline.

A sliding tariff is provided for the protection of the Colony's agricultural production, the maximum rate being placed sufficiently high to preclude the importation of any item which is produced in sufficient

quantities locally. Preferential margins are designed to implement the Ottawa and Anglo-American trade agreements.

Provision is made for the exemption from duty of Government stores, supplies for Armed Forces, industrial and educational supplies and meritorious awards.

## Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

British sterling money is declared to be the money of account under the British Currency Act (Chapter 159). Under the Proclamation of His Majesty in Council of 17th October, 1936, however, silver coins of the United Kingdom ceased with effect from 1st November, 1936, to be legal tender in the Colony for the payment of an amount exceeding 40 shillings.

Local currency, consisting of notes of 4s., 10s., £1 and £5 denominations, are issued by the Bahamas Government Currency Commissioners. A total of £637,400 of these notes was in circulation at the end of 1949.

Owing to the geographical position of the Colony and its dependence on tourism for its revenue, American currency circulates freely and, at present, owing to the revaluation of the £, is accepted at the rate of \$2.80 to the pound sterling, it being obligatory upon residents to turn in all dollars received to the authorised dealers.

The Royal Bank of Canada has maintained a branch in Nassau for many years, and in September, 1947, Barclay's Bank (Dominion Colonial and Overseas) opened a branch in Nassau.

The Post Office Savings Bank had deposits amounting to £351,525 for the year ended 30th June, 1949 or £7,908 less than in 1948. There was an increase of 1,809 in the number of depositors during the year.

## Chapter 5: Commerce

### IMPORTS

The Colony depends almost entirely on outside sources of supply for its requirements.

Imports in 1949 amounted to £4,775,942 compared with £4,720,151 in 1948. Included in the 1949 figure is the value of goods imported for the construction of a Vacation Village at West End, Grand Bahama. The value of general merchandise imported was slightly less than in 1948.

As in previous years, Canada and the United States of America were the principal sources of imported foodstuffs. Flour, one of the largest items of foodstuffs, came from Canada, as did condensed and evaporated milk, and cured meats. Corn products, fresh and pre-

served fruits, vegetables and rice came primarily from the United States. Imports of pickled meats were divided almost equally between Canada and the United States. The United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand supplied in substantial quantities some of the articles previously imported from Canada and the United States, such as cooking fats from the United Kingdom, canned and frozen meats from Australia, and butter from Australia and New Zealand. The demand for fresh milk and eggs, and to a large extent, poultry, was met by local production.

Electrical apparatus, medicines and drugs, cotton piece-goods, and wearing apparel came principally from the United States of America. Woollen piece-goods, motor-cars and tyres, bicycles, cement, and common washing soap came almost entirely from the United Kingdom.

Aruba was the chief source of supply of fuel oils.

#### EXPORTS

Total exports in 1949 amounted to £660,813, domestic exports being £488,365. It is encouraging to note that the value of domestic exports in 1949 exceeded similar exports in 1948 by £140,157. The item mainly responsible for this large increase was lumber, which was exported principally to West Indian islands—Antigua, Jamaica, Trinidad and Cuba being the largest buyers. Exports of lumber in 1949 exceeded exports in 1948 by £126,587. Canada was the principal importer of salt and tomatoes. Crawfish, shells, straw- and shell-work went to the United States of America.

A new item of export was shredded coconuts which went solely to the United Kingdom, and amounted to £14,561.

The total value of the Colony's trade during the last five years was as follows :

	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
Imports .	1,806,019	2,840,576	4,202,404	4,720,151	4,775,789
Exports (excluding specie) .	432,202	399,319	721,290	550,357	657,456

Re-exports were valued at £360,111 in 1947, £203,712 in 1948 and £172,448 in 1949.

#### IMPORTS: *Principal Items*

<i>Article</i>	1948		1949	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Butter . . . cwt.	3,289	46,688	2,751	42,100
Cheese . . . cwt.	1,154	17,345	1,531	21,284
Flour . . . brl.	54,198	204,934	51,708	170,211

<i>Article</i>	1948		1949	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Animal foodstuffs . cwt.	74,445	114,937	68,711	88,699
Lard substitutes . cwt.	11,636	96,549	16,202	115,583
Pickled meats . cwt.	5,756	44,414	5,955	38,951
Canned meats . value	—	60,056	—	64,961
Fresh meats . . cwt.	10,538	123,939	12,969	152,690
Milk, cond. & evap. . value	—	77,211	—	96,912
Rice . . . cwt.	19,113	58,507	23,359	57,893
Hominy . . . cwt.	28,520	51,906	21,617	30,910
Sugar . . . cwt.	19,452	90,626	35,561	64,834
Cigarettes . thousands	39,349	34,877	43,877	42,556
Lumber . . thous. feet	2,985	113,210	2,461	86,002
Shingles . thous. lin. in.	32,125	44,318	20,241	24,532
Wearing apparel . value	—	131,444	—	126,103
Boots and shoes . prs.	122,136	84,997	132,127	87,192
Cement . . . cwt.	207,673	72,317	235,650	62,452
Cotton piece-goods thous. sq. yds.	728	76,060	626	62,885
Electrical apparatus and appliances . value	—	124,825	—	97,128
Furniture . . value	—	161,547	—	123,583
Hardware . . value	—	211,396	—	150,894
Medicines and drugs . value	—	48,105	—	50,645
Machinery . . value	—	154,270	—	200,718
Motor cars and trucks no.	445	174,162	232	101,749
Oils, crude . thous. gals.	2,083	74,278	2,397	86,068
Gasoline . . thous. gals.	1,087	77,422	3,108	164,312
Kerosene . . thous. gals.	628	26,153	747	27,280
Lubricating . thous. gals.	89	15,682	85	15,171
Paints . . . value	—	59,278	—	41,781
Paper . . . value	—	36,384	—	41,706
Soap, common . cwt.	8,065	45,381	6,232	32,803
Toilet preparations . value	—	42,976	—	47,598
Woollen piece-goods thous. sq. yd.	101	59,587	80	50,829

EXPORTS: *Principal Items*

<i>Article</i>	1948		1949	
	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Value</i> £
Sisal . . . cwt.	5,100	13,409	3,249	4,386
Sponge . . . cwt.	129	8,543	22½	4,636
Tomatoes . thous. bush.	102	92,230	75	75,385
Crawfish . . . cwt.	14,078	67,764	16,415	64,392
Salt . . thous. bush.	882	45,623	1,529	68,142
Lumber . . thous. feet	3,347	70,903	8,271	197,490
Shell- and Straw-work .	—	11,229	—	8,799

## Chapter 6: Production

The natural resources of the Colony are marine, agricultural and forest products. Except for forest exploitation on the islands of Abaco, Grand Bahama and Andros, production is conducted individually, there being neither factories, plantations nor mines anywhere in the Colony.

Of the products of the Colony, sponge, crawfish, salt, tomatoes, shell, sisal, straw-work, hardwoods and lumber are exported ; other commodities are at present produced only for local consumption.

Persons of European descent are principally engaged in commerce and non-Europeans mainly in production ; but both may be found engaged in one or the other of these pursuits.

### AGRICULTURE

The efforts on the part of the Board of Agriculture to foster and encourage agriculture, animal husbandry and the protection of the marine products within the Colony have been well maintained during the year.

The recruitment of agricultural labourers for work in the United States continued and thus drew off a number of workers who would otherwise have been engaged in agriculture in the colony.

Owing to the restrictions on the importation of foodstuffs from dollar countries much more attention was paid to increasing production.

*Vegetables.* Such crops as cabbages, beets, carrots, spinach, English peas, lima beans, okras, etc. were grown in the Colony. Large quantities of seasonal vegetables were always available in the local market.

*Onions.* A fair crop of excellent quality was produced and consumed locally. The 1950 crop promised to be a bumper one as there was no shortage in supply of seed during the season. This crop should begin to come on the local market during March, 1950.

*Okras.* The growing of okras for export is a new industry which continues to attract the attention of many farmers. During 1949, 7,580 cwts. were exported valued at £19,356.

*Tomatoes.* During 1949, 1,800 acres were under cultivation ; 75,000 bushels were exported valued at £75,385. The average price paid at the auctions during this season was 10s. per lug. During 1948, 101,920 bushels valued at £92,230 were exported ; the crop averaged 10s. per lug.

The Board of Agriculture assisted farmers by furnishing them with seeds, fertiliser, packing material, labels and marketing facilities, etc.

*Pineapples.* A steady increase in the expansion of this industry is taking place. The exports during 1949 amounted to 2,862 dozen valued at £1,152 as compared with 2,672 dozen valued at £692

exported during 1948. There is an increase as far as export figures are concerned, but it has been discovered that the variety grown in the Bahamas is not suitable for export as it will not carry satisfactorily to the foreign markets.

*Citrus.* Efforts directed towards the expansion of this industry were maintained, and thousands of budded plants were sold to the general public in New Providence and the Out Islands. There was a marked increase in the number of plants set out, especially by those who were establishing new homes.

*Bananas.* A great deal of attention was paid during 1948 and 1949 to the cultivation of this important item of food. Several farmers in New Providence secured hundreds of suckers from the Out Islands, and set them out in their holdings. Results obtained were very good and prices remunerative. Apart from these results, thousands of bunches were sent in to the Produce Exchange in Nassau from the Out Islands. This fruit forms a very important addition to the dietary of the population.

*Sisal.* There were no new acreages planted during the year. The old acreages gave fair results together with remunerative prices. During 1949, 3,249 cwt. were exported valued at £4,386 compared with 5,100 cwt. valued at £13,409 in 1948.

*Sansevieria.* It was thought at one time that sansevieria might replace sisal as a peasant industry, but no interest has been displayed in the production of this product and the farms established at Andros, Cat Island, Long Island, Exuma and Abaco have been abandoned.

*Fodder Crops.* No success has yet been achieved by the Agricultural Board in its efforts to interest the peasant farmer in the growing of imported fodder crops, and its endeavours to distribute the various grasses grown at the Board's Experimental Station have proved a failure.

#### ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The following table shows the quantity of livestock in the Colony :

	1948	1949
Horses . . .	3,200	3,300
Horned Cattle . . .	3,700	3,700
Sheep . . .	21,500	21,500
Goats . . .	14,000	15,000
Swine . . .	8,000	7,500
Poultry . . .	375,000	380,000

The importance of animal husbandry to agricultural development in the Colony has always been stressed by the Board of Agriculture.

The board periodically furnished thorough-bred stock to farmers on the Out Islands for the purpose of improving the native stock. The vaccination of horses, mules and asses against sleeping-sickness

was carried out. Any outbreaks of diseases in the livestock of both New Providence and the Out Islands were attended to immediately by the Veterinary Officer.

### FISHERIES

The export of crawfish and scale fish under licence was continued. The fishing season opened on 1st October. Purchasing or collecting stations were established as usual under local inspectors, and thorough inspection of all cargoes was carried out. The Board proposes to re-establish inspection at destination early in the new year. During 1949, 16,415 cwt. valued at £64,392 were exported, compared with 14,078 cwt. valued at £67,764 during 1948.

The sponge beds were closed to fishing during the latter part of 1948 and 22½ cwt. valued at £4,636 were exported during 1949, compared with 129 cwt. valued at £8,543 during 1948.

Other products exported during the last two years are :

	Quantity		Value	
	1948	1949	1948	1949
			£	£
Cascarilla Bark . .	97 cwt.	308 cwt.	511	1,529
Small Shell . .	574 brls.	— *	6,366	8,858
Conch Shells . .	18,226 shells	121,000 shells	436	1,292
Turtle shell . .	5 cwt.	15 cwt.	700	1,226
Coconuts . .	30,200 nuts	6,042 cases	448	14,561

\* Quantity not available.

### CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES

There are no co-operative societies other than 17 farmers' associations on the Island of Eleuthera and Cat Island. These associations are assisted by the Board of Agriculture to the extent of advancing seed and fertiliser, etc., for the tomato and other crops. The Board markets the crops and deducts its advances from the earnings of each consignor until the entire debt is liquidated.

## Chapter 7: Social Services

### EDUCATION

Free education is provided by the Government. The general administration is vested in the Board of Education, consisting of a chairman and four members who are appointed annually by the Governor. The Director of Education is the official adviser to the Board and attends all meetings.

A scheme for the utilisation of certain military buildings at Oakes Field as an Education Centre has been accepted by the Government. Included in this scheme was provision for a technical school, a training college, accommodation for the Government High School, and hostels for Out Island students. The technical school was opened in October, 1949, and the training school in January, 1950.

### *Primary Education*

Primary education is compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 14 years, and is provided at public expense. The total amount expended by the Board of Education during 1949 was £103,813 2s. 5d., giving an average cost per pupil on the total roll for the year of £7 15s. 7d. The expenditure per child on administration and salaries was £5 3s. 4d. Teachers' salaries accounted for 72 per cent of the total expenditure.

At the end of 1949 the Board was maintaining 89 schools, and grants-in-aid were being paid to 35 schools. The total number of children attending these schools was 13,336. In addition to schools which are directly under the control of the Board of Education, there are 46 denominational schools with a total roll of over 3,601 and 7 private schools with over 324 pupils. Owing to the scattered population, this relatively large number of schools is not adequate. A number of children are out of the reach of any school, and in some localities attendance at school entails a certain amount of hardship on young children.

In conformity with the agricultural policy of the Government, prominence has been given in all Board schools to agricultural training. This is becoming an outstanding feature of education in the Bahamas. Sewing lessons for girl pupils are given in most schools. Two centres for cooking classes for girls and two for woodwork classes for boys have been established in Nassau.

*Staff and Accommodation.* The Board employed 152 teachers (principal and assistant), 120 student teachers, 244 monitors and 35 grant-in-aid teachers. The shortage of qualified teachers is proving a great handicap to education.

### *Secondary Education*

Secondary education leading to the School Certificate is provided for 124 pupils in the Government High School. There are also five schools maintained by religious bodies which provide secondary education for about 631 pupils. Two of these schools satisfy the conditions laid down in the Secondary Education Act and receive assistance from the Government.

*Government High School.* The Government High School is open to children between the ages of 11 and 18 who can qualify by passing an entrance examination set by the headmaster.

The headmaster and the six teachers possess college degrees. The number of pupils attending in 1949 was 124. The cost of maintaining this school was £7,428 in 1949. The fees are £10 10s. 0d. per annum. The general standard reached is that of the School Certificate.

*Queen's College.* This school is under the direction of the Methodist Missionary Society. The headmaster, who is a Methodist minister, is appointed from England, although the school is non-sectarian.

There are 12 teachers, four of whom have college degrees. Primary and secondary education is provided. The fees are £18 per annum for the primary school and £30 per annum for the secondary school. In 1949 there were 327 pupils.

*St. Francis Academy.* This school is maintained by the Roman Catholic Church and conducted by the Sisters of Charity of Mount Saint Vincent of New York, U.S.A. In 1949 there were 110 pupils. Primary and secondary education is provided. The standard reached is that of the School Certificate. The fees are £12 10s. od. per annum.

*St. Augustine's College.* St. Augustine's College, a secondary school for boys, was established in January, 1945. It is conducted by priests of the Order of St. Benedict. The college is located four miles east of Nassau in the Fox Hill District. Pupils are prepared for the Cambridge School Certificate examinations. In 1949 the staff consisted of 9 qualified teachers, all with degrees. The fees are £20 per annum. In 1949 there were 48 pupils.

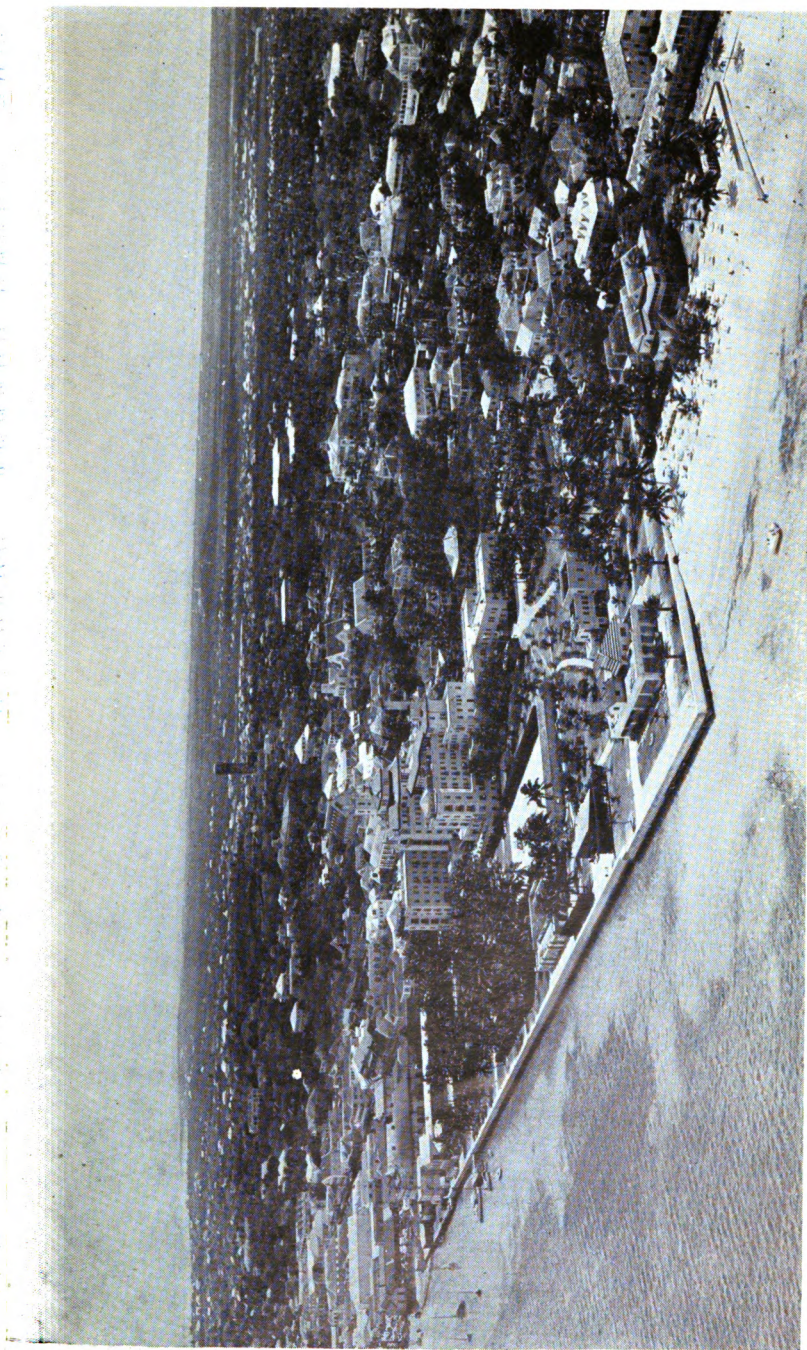
*St. John's College.* St. John's College is the Diocesan secondary school and is managed by a Board of Governors under the chairmanship of the Lord Bishop of Nassau. It is financed by pupils' fees and a Government grant. It was opened in January, 1947, with an enrolment of 135 pupils. The present numbers are 165. The staff consists of the headmaster and six qualified assistants. The curriculum is based on the syllabus set for the Cambridge Certificate examinations. The fees are £16 10s. od. per annum.

*St. Andrew's School.* This school was opened in 1948 by a school company with a capital of £10,000, under the direction of a board of directors. There is a headmaster and four teachers, four of whom are university graduates. The school takes children from nine to 14 years, although the aim is to raise the age limit and to raise the standard of education to that of the School Certificate. The number of pupils on the roll is 30. The fees are £30 to £60 per annum.

### *Training of Teachers*

Arrangements have been made to start in January, 1950, a small Training College and Training School at Oakes Field. The school has accommodation for 260 children. Thirty teachers or student teachers have been withdrawn from the Nassau schools for training. Ten of these will teach in the school, the remainder will attend lectures.

The Board of Education conducts a summer course for teachers yearly for a period of three weeks. The course is held in Nassau and teachers from all the out-lying islands attend. The purpose of the summer school held in Nassau from 25th July to 12th August, 1949, was to help assistants and subordinate teachers in the practical work of teaching. Over 148 head teachers, assistant teachers and sub-



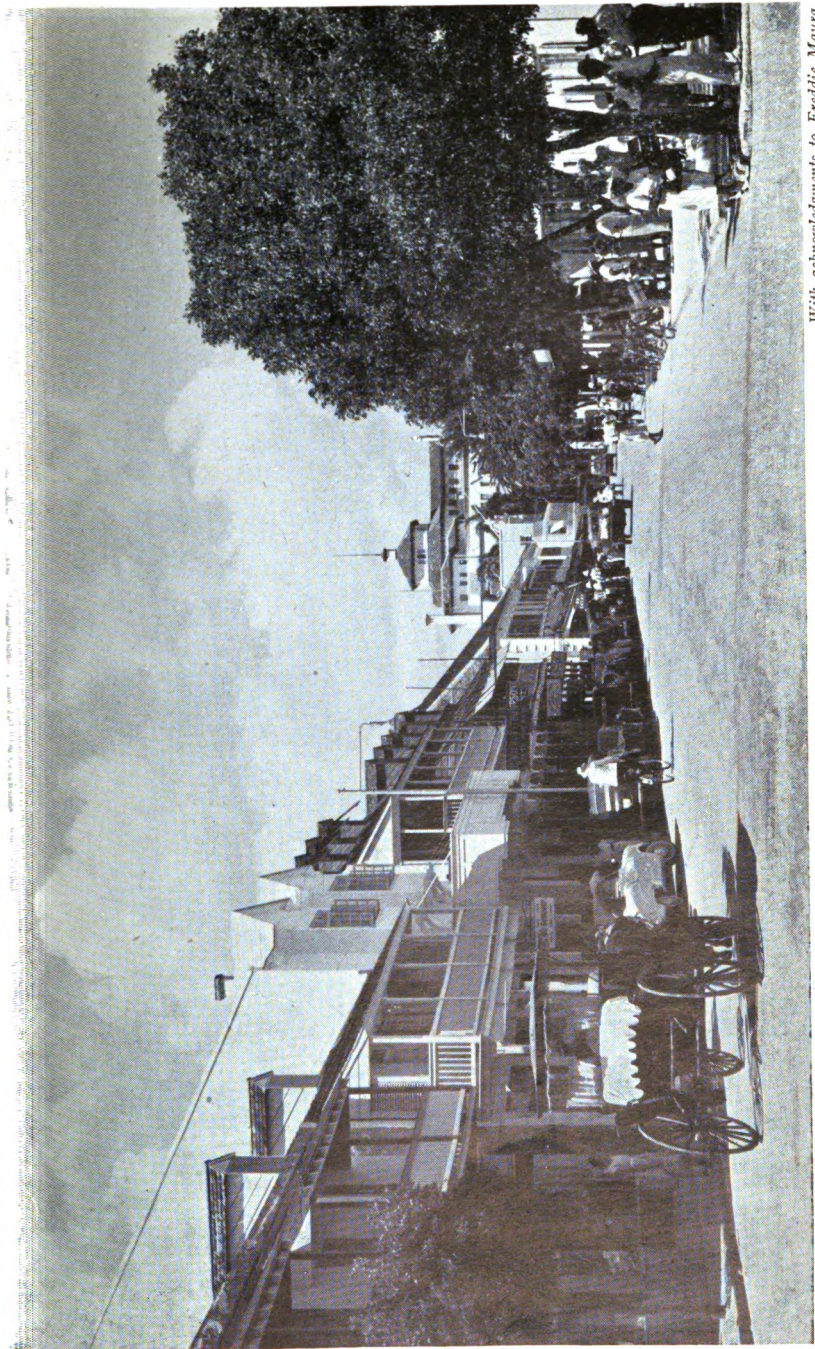
*With acknowledgements to Freddie Maura*

AERIAL VIEW OF NASSAU  
*In the foreground is the British Colonial Hotel*



*With acknowledgments to Freddie Mauro*

PARADISE BEACH, NASSAU  
*In the background are Pirate Class Yachts*



BAY STREET, NASSAU  
*The main thoroughfare and business centre*

*With acknowledgments to Freddie Maura*



GOVERNOR'S HARBOUR, ELEUTHERA, ABOUT 60 MILES FROM NASSAU  
*With acknowledgments to Freddie Maura*

ordinate teachers from the Out Islands and 39 teachers from the Nassau schools attended.

### *Technical Education*

On 5th October, 1949, Lord Listowel opened the new Technical School at Oakes Field.

### *Domestic Science*

The Dundas Civic Centre provides training for 135 pupils in housewifery and cooking, as well as giving instruction in table waiting, etc.

### *Visual and Aural Aids*

A start has been made with a library of film strips and of 16 mm. films ; there are at present 60 film strips, 200 reels of educational films, two 16 mm. sound projectors and 16 film strip projectors.

Lessons to the preparatory, junior and senior schools have been broadcast daily from 9.15 a.m. to 10.15 a.m. In addition, lectures on aims of education, history of education and educational psychology have been broadcast from 6.15 p.m. to 6.45 p.m. daily.

### *Miscellaneous*

Under a scheme sponsored by the House of Assembly four teachers from the United Kingdom arrived to take up duties in the Out Islands.

At the present time there are six members of the staff of the Board of Education attending universities or colleges in the United Kingdom, two at St. Andrews, three in London and one in Edinburgh. In addition the holders of two Government Scholarships are at Edinburgh and Belfast.

The Bahamas Branch of the British Red Cross Society subsidises the provision of milk to 16 schools in Nassau and 41 in the Out Islands.

## HEALTH

The climate of the Colony is most conducive to good health. Pipe-borne purified water, a drainage and sewerage system, ice plant and cold storage are features of the capital, Nassau.

The city water and milk supply are regularly analysed and a high standard of purity maintained. Elsewhere in the Colony protection of wells from contamination is attempted, though boiling of water is still a necessary precaution.

### *Medical*

The Medical and Public Health Service is administered by a Board of Health with the Chief Medical Officer as adviser.

The health problems of the Bahamas are venereal disease, tuberculosis and malnutrition. General diseases occur in average distribution as elsewhere. In New Providence 318 cases of measles and 209 cases of chickenpox were reported during the year. No other epidemics occurred.

The Government incurred the following expenditure in connection with the hospital and public health service :

	1949	1948	1947	1946
Hospital .	£117,533(1)	£117,107(2)	£63,844	£36,737
Public Health .	44,969	41,998(3)	42,387	25,343
Total .	<u>£162,502</u>	<u>£159,105</u>	<u>£106,231</u>	<u>£62,080(4)</u>

- (1) Included £11,925 for further New Hospital plans, 1949.
- (2) Included £21,200 for New Hospital plans, 1948.
- (3) Markets transferred from Board of Health to Agricultural and Marine Products Board.
- (4) Did not include cost-of-living allowance.

The Prospect Hospital (ex R.A.F.) situated five miles from Nassau is still in operation as the general hospital and has accommodation for 160 patients. The Nassau Hospital has 215 beds. The medical staff consists of a Chief Medical Officer, four full-time medical officers, a part-time anaesthetist and a part-time medical officer. The nursing staff consists of a British matron and eight sisters with 76 local nurses of whom 59 are in training. The total staff of all grades is 233.

Most of the service is free and patients can pay anything from 1s. to 10s. a day for public to semi-private beds. A private pavilion takes care of the patients of private practitioners. The total actual revenue of the hospital for 1949 was £8,246 13s. 8d, which represents 8 per cent of Hospital recurrent expenditure. The services rendered by the Hospital are shown in the following table :

	<i>Out Patients</i>	<i>Treatments</i>	<i>Ambulance Calls</i>	<i>Prescriptions</i>
1947 .	9,440	21,824	3,503	37,826
1948 .	9,935	26,481	4,870	47,014
1949 .	12,780	28,799	5,519	55,455

	<i>Admissions</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Pauper Relief</i>
1947 .	3,364	526	256	680
1948 .	4,145	597	352	686
1949 .	5,301	708	393	679

The Venereal Disease Clinic treated 1,195 cases, giving 8,677 intravenous and 14,631 intra-muscular injections. The Laboratory and X-ray department showed an increase in service rendered. Ante-natal and infant welfare clinics continued their good work.

The average stay in hospital was 7½ days : the daily cost per patient in 1949 was 15s. 3d.; in 1948 15s.; in 1947 11s.; in 1946 7s. and in 1937 4s.

The Out Islands had the service of four district medical officers and eight unqualified medical practitioners. Ten qualified locally trained nurses and 10 midwives are stationed at various centres to take care of cases.

The Public Health Nursing Service is under a specially qualified supervisor, who, with five graduate nurses, is responsible for three health centres dealing with ante-natal, post-natal, infant and child welfare work. This is combined with a school service, home visits and the notification of any disease beyond their scope of treatment. Details of the service are as follows :

	<i>Ante-natal</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Vaccinations</i>	<i>Home Visits</i>
1948 .	3,256	229	—	7,315
1949 .	3,189	229	2,957	6,349
	<i>Births</i>	<i>Clinics</i>	<i>Attendance at Clinics</i>	<i>New cases</i>
1948 .	1,446	168	10,078	1,229
1949 .	1,454	151	10,109	1,245

The Bahamas Red Cross continued its excellent nursing and welfare work and had three local graduate nurses under a British Welfare Officer. The milk scheme for schools is showing good results.

### *Sanitation*

The Sanitary Inspector with an assistant and six sub-sanitary inspectors carries out the policies determined by the Board of Health. In the Out Islands local Boards of Health supervise the sanitation of their districts.

In New Providence the water supply is checked bacteriologically every week. All the milk supply is pasteurised. Meat is examined by the Sanitary Inspector. Only licensed premises are allowed to sell food and food handlers are examined twice yearly.

Hygiene as a whole is good in New Providence in spite of an incomplete sanitation programme for certain local sections.

Some experimental sandfly control with gammexane was carried out during 1949 with promising results indicating that intensive campaigns efficiently carried out in the future might well effectively bring under control this troublesome pest. Satisfactory results were achieved by the use of gammexane at the Butlin Vacation Village, Grand Bahama.

## Chapter 8: Legislation

Of the 21 Acts passed by the Legislature during the year, only the following deserve specific mention :

The Emergency Tax Amendment Act (No. 2 of 1949) added the following to the existing list of goods exempted from Emergency

Tax upon importation into the Colony : ale and beer, porter and stout, pure alcohol, cordials and liqueurs of all kinds and wines of all kinds.

The Prison Loan Act (No. 4 of 1949) empowers the Governor in Council to raise a loan of £68,000 locally by the issue of debentures for the purpose of defraying expenses in connection with the construction of a new prison in the Island of New Providence.

The Public Officers (Devaluation Allowance) Act (No. 19 of 1949) and the Pensions (Devaluation Allowance) Act (No. 20 of 1949) provide for a temporary increase in the salaries of public officers and pensioners. This increase was made necessary by the sudden rise in the cost of living due to the revaluation of the pound sterling. Both Acts are of temporary duration only.

## Chapter 9: Justice, Police and Prisons

### JUSTICE

#### *Law and Courts*

The law of the Colony is :

- (a) The common law of England as it existed at the time of the settlement and subject to the exceptions mentioned in the Declaratory Act (Chapter 7 Statutes, Revised Edition, 1929).
- (b) Statutes of the Imperial Parliament.
- (c) Statutes of the Colonial Legislature.

There is a Supreme Court of the Colony which sits in Nassau, is presided over by a Chief Justice, and has the jurisdiction of a High Court of England. An appeal, in civil matters, lies from the Supreme Court to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The Supreme Court sits throughout the year as occasion requires, but ordinary sessions are held quarterly for disposal of criminal information and of civil actions listed for trial by jury.

The principal magisterial court of the Colony is that of the stipendiary and circuit magistrate, who is stationed in Nassau, and appeals from his court lie to the Supreme Court. Magisterial powers are also exercised by commissioners in charge of Districts in the Out Islands, and by justices of the peace, and appeals from such courts lie to the stipendiary and circuit magistrate, who goes on circuit from time to time among the Out Islands, to hear such appeals and dispose of cases triable only, in original jurisdiction, by a Circuit Justice. The stipendiary and circuit magistrate, commissioners, and, where so empowered, justices of the peace are also responsible for the conduct of preliminary inquiries into indictable offences triable by the Supreme Court.

Payment of fines by instalments is permitted in suitable cases, but the necessity seldom arises. The Penal Code provides for placing offenders on probation, and there is one probation officer.

The main types of civil case are those for money lent, rentals and damages; the criminal cases chiefly consist of charges of wounding, burglary, house-breaking, stealing, the use of obscene language, and unruly behaviour.

#### *Prevalence of crime*

The following table shows the number of cases dealt with by the stipendiary and circuit magistrate and in the Supreme Court for the past three years :

<i>Magistrate's Court</i>			<i>Supreme Court</i>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil cases</i>	<i>Criminal cases</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Civil cases</i>	<i>Criminal cases</i>
1947 . .	1,518	1,137	1947 . .	127	88
1948 . .	1,845	1,457	1948 . .	178	128
1949 . .	1,710	1,185	1949 . .	216	141

It will be seen from the above table that there has been a decrease in the number of both civil and criminal cases held in the Magistrate's Court in 1949, but that the number of cases held in the Supreme Court has continued to increase. The increase in criminal cases is being met by the imposition of more severe terms of imprisonment in the hope that it may prove a deterrent.

Of the four cases in which murder was charged in 1948, two persons were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death and two were found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to seven and fifteen years' imprisonment respectively. In 1949 there were five cases of murder. In these cases, two persons were found guilty of murder and sentenced to death, two were found guilty of manslaughter and sentenced to three years' and life imprisonment respectively and the other person was acquitted.

It is thought that the increase of civil cases in the Supreme Court reflects the rising prosperity of the Colony and is related to the high wages and salaries now being paid in all trades and occupations. There is a marked increase in the number of claims on promissory notes and for goods sold and delivered.

#### *Juvenile Delinquency and Probation Services*

The fact that most indictable offences are committed by persons of ages averaging from 18 to 25 years shows the lack of proper services in the Colony to cope with juvenile delinquency. The Children and Young Persons Act, 1947, came into force on 18th September, 1947. A Juvenile Court has been set up in Nassau, but it is too early to express any opinion on its effects upon juvenile delinquency. The question of setting up juvenile courts in the Out Islands is under consideration.

The Industrial School, to which juvenile offenders are committed,

does not appear to serve the purposes for which it is intended, and a general reorganisation of this institution is now engaging the attention of the Government.

### POLICE

The Bahamas Police was established by an Act of Legislature in 1864. The present authorised establishment of the Force is six officers and 200 other ranks.

The Bahamas Police is a semi-military force, there being no imperial troops or defence force in the Colony. It is equipped with rifles and automatic weapons and trained as a rifle company. All ceremonial parades, guards and sentries are provided by the Force. A band of 18 instruments is maintained.

The headquarters are in Nassau, New Providence, where the main strength of the Force is concentrated.

For civil police duties the Force is organised into headquarters and street duty divisions with a separate Criminal Investigation Department. It is equipped with a motor transport section consisting of 11 vehicles, four of which are equipped with two-way radio telephone, and the C.I.D. has a well-equipped photographic and fingerprint section.

The town of Nassau is divided into beats which are constantly and regularly patrolled from one police station and three sub-stations.

The rural area of New Providence is patrolled from two sub-stations.

The Out Islands generally are policed by a force of local and district constables under the Out Island Commissioners, but at certain of the more populous islands a constable of the regular force is stationed for duty periods of six months.

During 1949 it was found necessary to open a sub-station at West End on the island of Grand Bahama during the construction of the Butlin Vacation Village.

The Force is also the fire brigade for New Providence and is equipped with nine motor fire engines, all personnel of the Force being trained as firemen.

The officers of the Force are appointed from the Colonial Police Service, and the other ranks are recruited locally from the various Bahama Islands as far as is possible, and from Barbados and British Guiana when local recruiting falls short. Individual men from Trinidad and Jamaica, living in Nassau, have also been enlisted.

### PRISONS

The main prison in Nassau has accommodation for 117 male and 19 female prisoners. There is a prison farm at Fox Hill for first offenders; it can accommodate 72 male prisoners in dormitories.

Work was commenced in the latter part of 1946 on a new prison at Fox Hill to accommodate 64 male prisoners of the recidivist or habitual criminal type. Little progress had been made up to the end of 1947 owing to the difficulty experienced in obtaining materials from England, especially steel. In 1948 the Government decided to convert the recidivist prison into the main prison with accommodation for 224 male and 30 female prisoners, together with the necessary ancillary buildings and staff quarters. The present main prison in Nassau will be abandoned as a prison ; it is too small and its situation in the midst of a built-up area is unsatisfactory for many reasons. Plans and estimates for the new prison at Fox Hill were approved by the Legislature in May, 1949, and construction has progressed as fast as is possible in view of delays in the delivery of steelwork and other materials from Britain.

There are small prisons or " lock-ups " on all Out Islands, which are under the supervision of the respective Commissioners. Prisoners sentenced to terms exceeding three months are transferred to Nassau.

The health of prisoners during the year was uniformly good.

The daily average number of prisoners in the Nassau prisons was 214 in 1947, 258 in 1948 and 286 in 1949.

Juvenile male prisoners are accommodated at the Industrial School, half a mile distant from the first offenders' prison at Fox Hill, until they reach the age of 16. The age limit was reduced from 18 to 16 years in 1948. A Visiting Committee is responsible for the control and management of this school, and an effort is made to teach agriculture and other crafts in conjunction with elementary schooling. The daily average number of inmates during 1949 was 50.

## Chapter 10: Public Utilities and Public Works

### ELECTRICITY

The largest supply system in the Colony is in the Island of New Providence and is owned and operated by the Government.

A supply was first given in 1908 from a small direct-current plant in the town of Nassau, driven by gas engines from a producer gas plant. In 1922 the system was completely reorganised, the old direct-current plant being replaced with diesel-driven alternators, supplying a system of 2,300 volts high tension and 200 or 115 volts low tension on a frequency of 60 cycles.

In 1937 a loan was raised to establish a new power station some two miles outside the town, as it was evident that the original power station site could not provide sufficient room for future expansion.

The first installations at the new site were completed in 1939, a small diesel-driven alternator being installed for peak load purposes.

This was followed in 1941 by the installation of a 1,100 h.p. super-charged diesel alternator set, and a further two sets of the same capacity were installed during 1946 and 1947.

To complete the process of eliminating the old power station and to meet the rapidly increasing departmental commitments, four new units totalling some 7,200 h.p. are to be installed in the near future.

The generating voltage at the new power station is 6,900 volts and all the new high-voltage feeders are at this voltage ; the high-voltage distribution in the town, however, remains at 2,300 volts. If development of the eastern and western ends of the island continues, it may be necessary to install additional transmission lines at 22,000 volts to provide a suitable supply.

Electricity rates are amongst the lowest in the West Indies, although some increases in charges are being made to meet the continuing increase of fuel, labour and material costs.

Altogether, the undertaking has some 58 miles of underground high-tension and low-tension networks, and some 142 miles of overhead high-tension and low-tension feeders. The number of consumers connected at the end of 1949 was 5,500, the units generated during that year being 14,976,360.

An extensive programme of expansion and reconstruction is in hand, an important aspect of the latter being the replacement of much of the present overhead system by underground networks. Some twenty years of experience with underground cables has shown that local conditions are not unfavourable to their use. The elimination of as much as possible of the overhead system is thought to be a good investment against the probably extensive and costly damage which may be caused by hurricanes or similar tropical disturbances experienced in this area.

Several of the Out Islands have small privately owned generating plants which provide a limited supply for the general public. The larger undertakings are generally equipped with diesel-driven alternators, generating at American standard low voltages and frequency.

#### WATERWORKS

The original source of the supply of fresh water at Blue Hills became practically exhausted several years ago. The average salinity of the water being produced at the end of 1949 in this area was rather high for ordinary domestic users, but by mixing it with the fresher water obtained from the other stations the salinity was reduced. The stations at Prospect and the Grove were enlarged to great advantage, and the system at Perpalls was improved considerably. These stations are from four to five miles west of the Blue Hills station, and are operated by small electrical pumps and wind-mills. During the day the water from these systems is chlorinated and pumped to the reservoirs at Fort Fincastle. At night, when there is a surplus, water is pumped to the storage tanks at Blue Hills,

where it is mixed with the water of higher salinity, purified and then pumped to the main reservoirs at Fort Fincastle. The result is that water of good quality and of a moderate salinity is normally supplied to the city and suburban areas.

The expansion of the various residential districts and the large number of new houses have increased the demand for supplies, and the consumption increased from 63 million gallons in 1934 to 223 million gallons in 1948.

All ground water on the island is the accumulation of excess rainfall, and extreme care must be exercised in pumping not to upset the hydrostatic balance between this layer of fresh water and the underlying sea-water in the rock. For this reason the amount of production over a given area has been carefully designed, and pumping is by means of a series of small pumps with suctions submerged only a few feet in the water, no single well yielding more than 150 gallons per hour. The results have been reasonably satisfactory and the salinity of the present wells remains fairly constant.

In view of these conditions, the Public Board of Works exercises stringent control over the consumption of city water, limiting its use to domestic and industrial purposes, with certain restrictions. It is not allowed for the watering of lawns and gardens, and is prohibited for the flushing of sanitary fixtures in houses where there are a number of such units. In 1948 the rates were revised, with a view to discouraging waste and unnecessary use of water. These are now on a sliding scale, which increases the price from 3s. for the first thousand gallons per week, to 6s. for the second thousand, and 12s. per 1,000 gallons for all amounts over two thousand gallons per week. Water for industrial purposes is charged at a flat rate of 3s. per thousand gallons irrespective of the quantity used.

That these revised rates have had the desired effect is shown by the fact, that although 189 new connections were made during the year, the consumption was reduced from 223 million gallons in 1948 to 208 million gallons in 1949. These measures are essential if the supply is to remain of moderate salinity; otherwise its indiscriminate use would almost certainly result in depletion of the areas producing fresh water. In the meanwhile, investigations are being carried out over other areas, which also might produce fresh water, in order to take care of additional future demands. The linking of the former R.A.F. water supply at Windsor Airfield, 12 miles outside the city, to the existing system, will be started as soon as material arrives, possibly early in 1950.

A scheme by a private company for the collection of rainwater from an artificial catchment area is under consideration. If this project materializes, it may solve the water problem of New Providence for some years to come.

#### SEWERAGE

The Public Board of Works regulates the sanitary arrangements of all new buildings and buildings which are extensively renovated.

Whenever these buildings are located in an area serviced by the sewerage system, it is compulsory that all fixtures be connected to the city sewers. The inspection of work done by private plumbers is enforced, to ensure that all work carried out is according to the most modern methods of sanitation.

All sewers empty into a main reception tank at Malcolm's Park from which the raw sewage is pumped to the tanks at the sewerage plant on Potters' Cay. This plant is of the "activated sludge" type. The crude sewage is broken up, screened and activated so that in its final stages all objectionable odours are eliminated. The expenses of operating this plant are not covered by the sewerage rates, but from the standpoint of public health it is extremely profitable.

Whenever possible, extensions of the city sewers are made in streets or private subdivisions formerly not serviced. Work is carried out continuously in reconditioning the sewer mains and pumps, and recently improvements were made at the main station to facilitate the handling of the increasing amount of sewage, due to the growth of the township in general, and the extension of sewers in areas where formerly there was no proper sanitation. In such districts, owners are requested to condemn septic tanks and latrines and connect their properties direct to the sewerage system. This ensures the proper disposal of sewage, and the results have been very gratifying.

#### BROADCASTING

During 1949, this Colony was represented at the North American Regional Broadcasting Conference which was held in Montreal, Canada. Whilst no agreement was signed at this Conference, due to failure to agree on limits of interference, etc., no claim to the frequency of 1540 k/c.s was made by any other country, which leaves the Bahamas the use of this frequency on a clear channel basis. During the year the hours of operation of the station were extended from  $5\frac{1}{2}$  to  $9\frac{1}{2}$  per day, and new studio equipment was purchased from an appropriation made by the Legislature. The standard of programmes was raised, and the engagement of a news editor resulted in three news broadcasts a day, ranging from 8 to 15 minutes each. These new programmes are of particular interest to the Out Islands where community radios are provided in many settlements. The Board of Education is using the medium of broadcasting to present educational programmes to the Board schools in the Out Islands. This idea was given impetus during the year and is proving very beneficial to the Out Island schools.

#### PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

The maintenance, superintendence and control of all public works on the island of New Providence is under the direction of the Public Works Department, which carries out its duties on behalf of the Public Board of Works. This Board consists of a chairman and four other members appointed annually by the Governor. Two members of

the Board are also members of the House of Assembly, not holding any office under the Crown or in the public service. All funds for public works are granted annually to the Board by the Legislature.

Public works on the Out Islands are controlled by the Out Island and Economic Investigation Committee, work being carried out under the direction of the Chief Out Island Commissioner. A local Public Board of Works at each settlement or township also assists in directing the works to the best advantage. The Public Works Department gives technical advice where necessary, and, if requested by the Committee, carries out certain specific work for them on the various Out Islands.

The following are the public works carried out by the Department :

*Waterworks.* Recovery, distribution, maintenance, extension and improvement of plant, and administration of all matters connected with the entire water supply system.

*Sewerage.* Collection, disposal, maintenance, extension and improvement of plant.

*Public Buildings.* The Board is responsible for the maintenance of Government House, the main public buildings, and the police buildings and stations. The rapid growth of Nassau in recent years has rendered the main administrative buildings inadequate. The renovation of the Secretariat was completed early in 1949, but, owing to the financial position, it has not been possible to carry out any improvements to the other public buildings. The proposed new police stations in the Southern and Eastern Districts have also been postponed.

*Private buildings.* The Board exercises control over the construction, location, architecture and planning (including remodelling and renovating) of all buildings in certain zones, as authorised by the Buildings Regulations Act. This prevents any faulty construction or sanitation and overcrowding of houses, and ensures that no buildings are erected which are not in conformity with the local style of architecture, which is predominantly Georgian. The results which have been achieved are remarkable, and the large number of houses built in recent years contribute to the old-world charm and picturesqueness of Nassau. Frequent inspections are made to ensure that there is adequate and proper sanitation, and wherever possible arrangements are made for private supplies of water, including storage of rain water, which may be used for all domestic purposes other than for drinking, thus conserving the supply of purified and chlorinated water as much as possible.

The Buildings Restrictions Orders (under the Defence Regulations Act) regulate the construction of new buildings both in New Providence and the Out Islands, but the previous limit of the amount allowed to be expended on a single building was removed during the

year. These Orders are revised as conditions warrant, and in consequence building materials have been available to all classes. As a result, a number of homes have been constructed for the poorer classes and persons of moderate means, as well as more expensive types of house for wealthier members of the Colony.

*Roads.* All public roads, sidewalks and abutments in New Providence are vested in the Board, which also controls their building and maintenance. The Board also exercises its right in ensuring that no awnings or signs are erected over the streets or sidewalks which might be dangerous to the public. The Board also regulates the type of such signs. All neon or ultra-modern electric flashing signs are prohibited, with the result that the business district with its older type of signs still retains its quaintness and old-fashioned atmosphere. Bill posting is also prohibited.

The Traffic Committee make rules dealing with the direction of traffic, location of parking places, etc. This Committee has as its chairman the Chairman of the Public Board of Works, and four other members—the Director of Public Works, the Commissioner of Police, the Chairman of the Development Board, and another member representing the Chamber of Commerce, who is appointed annually by the Governor.

In 1948, all main roads in the city were made one way streets, which relieved traffic congestion considerably. A few slight amendments have been made during 1949, changing the direction of traffic along several streets, so as to make conditions more favourable for horse-drawn vehicles; but otherwise the original rules have proved completely satisfactory.

During the year the Eleuthera Road from Gregory Town South to Wemyss Bight over the whole length of Eleuthera, some 60 miles, with the exception of a few minor stretches, was completed, and 28 miles of it received surfacing with cut back asphalt. Traversing as it does many hilly sections of extremely untractable rock, the execution of this work represents a major engineering achievement.

The part that the road will play in opening up the Island to development, and in bringing greater amenities to the settlements along its length, cannot be exaggerated, and, although expenditure of over £100,000 has been incurred to date, it is generally felt that this money represents a sound investment for the future.

Roads have proper drainage both by surface drains and underground storm sewers. Even after the heaviest tropical showers the streets are free of water in a very short time after the rain has stopped. The drains are kept open and clean at all times, thus eliminating the hazard of mosquito breeding or foul odours.

*Parks and recreation grounds.* All parks and public places, including recreation grounds, are carefully supervised and are at all times kept clean, and free from weeds and rubbish. Shade trees planted and cultivated by the Public Works Department form a

restful shade from the heat of the sun, and annuals and flowering shrubs add to their attractiveness. The most recent improvement has been the landscaping on both sides of the road leading from the airport to the city, where the lawns studded with numerous varieties of palms, shrubs, annuals and other flowers, make a pleasant impression on travellers arriving in Nassau. It has not, unfortunately, been possible to carry out the scheme along the whole length of the approach road, but it is hoped to do this when funds permit.

A nursery is maintained for supplying these trees and shrubs. Formerly the surplus was sold to the public, but recently the demand for such plants, for parks and other public gardens, has been so great that sales to the public have been discontinued.

*Forts.* The old historic forts of Nassau are preserved in their original setting.

*Cemeteries.* The Board controls all cemeteries which are maintained from public funds. Burials are regulated and the proper spacing and depth of graves is supervised.

*Royal Air Force Cemetery.* The Royal Air Force Cemetery was built in 1943 by the combined efforts of the U.S. Post Engineers (who maintained the two O.T.U. airfields built under Lend-Lease) and the R.A.F. unit stationed in Nassau. Since 1945 the cemetery has been maintained by the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, a women's civic organisation, which provides funds for its upkeep augmented by a grant from the Imperial War Graves Commission and donations from next of kin. The names of 112 airmen of the United Nations who lost their lives while on duty in the Bahamas appear on a memorial plaque (inside the lych-gate), and 53 hardwood crosses mark the graves of those who were laid to rest in this cemetery. The grounds, which are planted with shade trees and flowering tropical shrubs, are well maintained.

*Fire Wells and Fire Wharves.* The Board has constructed a number of wells on the shoulders of the roads in low areas which are used by the Fire Department for fighting fires. These wells give an adequate supply of water and can supply several engines simultaneously if necessary. They have been very satisfactory, not only in saving drinking water, but in providing an ample supply of water close to the residential areas in cases of fire. Along the water-front there are several wharves from which the fire-engines may pump seawater for fire-fighting purposes. These wharves are kept in good condition and are also used by the local or inter-island boats for landing purposes.

*Subdivisions.* During recent years the growth of the residential areas has been phenomenal. Private enterprise has been responsible for the construction of roads and clearing of lots in these districts. The Board, under the Private Roads Act, exercises its powers to make certain that such developments and subdivisions

have roads suitable for motor traffic and that building lots sold in these localities are of a reasonable size to avoid overcrowding of houses, also that persons building homes in these subdivisions are provided with public utilities.

*Lighthouses.* There are 41 automatic flashing acetylene navigational lights operated by the Board. These lights are maintained and serviced by the Public Works Department, and new ones are erected by them when necessary. These lights are mainly for the benefit of local or Out Island navigation, although many of them are visible from the main steamship routes and are used by offshore shipping. They are unattended, being serviced only once a year (except in cases where they become extinguished) and are therefore classed in the Admiralty List of Lights as such.

Formerly 37 oil-lights were maintained by the Board, and were attended by keepers. Recently the control of these oil-lights was handed over to the Out Island Department, as it was much easier and more economical for the local Commissioner to supervise the maintenance, inasmuch as these lights were near settlements on the Out Islands.

## Chapter 11: Communications

### SHIPPING

During 1949 ships of the Canadian National Steamship Line ran regular freight services from Halifax during the winter months, and from Montreal during the summer to Nassau, bringing 9,543 tons of cargo. A large percentage of the Colony's imports and exports was transported by locally owned vessels, ranging in size from approximately 300 to 80 tons net, plying between Nassau and Miami, Florida. A number of vessels registered in the Bahamas were engaged in transporting bananas from Cuba and other West Indian islands to Miami. A regular freight service between England and Nassau was run by steamers of the Royal Mail Line in 1949, and in addition a freight service by steamers of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, Liverpool, was inaugurated in 1948. In 1949 a freight service between Jacksonville, Florida, and Nassau was maintained by motor vessels of the Florida Caribbean Line.

A regular fortnightly freight service from New York was inaugurated during 1949 by the North Atlantic & Gulf Steamship Company. This service has proved of great benefit to the Colony.

Due to the continued stringency of the United States wireless requirements for passenger-carrying vessels, transportation of passengers by local vessels, which was abandoned some years ago, was not resumed, and passengers arriving in and departing from the Colony were transported by Pan American Airways and British South American Airways.

On 31st October, 1948, a regular passenger service by M.S. *Reina del Pacifico* of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company between this

port and Liverpool, England, was resumed. This service was in operation prior to the outbreak of war, and its resumption has proved of great convenience to the Colony.

The R.M.S. *Mauretania* made ten calls at Nassau during the winter of 1949 in a series of cruises between New York and South America, and in the same year the S.S. *Veendam* and S.S. *Queen of Bermuda* included Nassau in their cruise itinerary.

The only port in the Colony other than Nassau at which there was shipping activity of any consequence was Inagua, where ships called for the purpose of taking salt exports principally to Canada. The number of ships calling at Inagua was 297 aggregating 71,968 net tons in 1949. The total number of ships entered and cleared at ports within the Colony in 1949 was 3,831 with a total tonnage of 1,756,668.

## RAILWAYS

There are no railways in the Colony.

## ROADS

All main roads and the majority of the secondary roads in Nassau are asphalted. The Public Works Department has for years been following the practice of asphaltting all roads, whether main or secondary, when they are rebuilt. Consequently all roads are gradually being paved with asphalt. Maintenance and repair crews are kept at work on these roads throughout the year, thus ensuring their good condition.

A recent survey showed the following mileage of the roads on New Providence, practically all of which may be used by motor traffic :

Type	Public	Private	Total
Asphalted . . .	112 miles	7.5 miles	119.5 miles
Macadamised . . .	27 "	5.5 "	32.5 "
Unimproved earth	20 "	22 "	42 "
Totals .	159 miles	35 miles	194 miles

The following vehicles were registered in the Colony at the end of 1949 :

Motor cars . . . . .	1,678*
Taxi cabs . . . . .	100
Buses . . . . .	6
Trucks . . . . .	581*
Motor cycles . . . . .	74
Bicycles . . . . .	6,501
Horse-drawn cabs . . . . .	28
Horse-drawn drays . . . . .	25

Total . 8,993

\*Figures available only to 31st October, 1949.

## CIVIL AVIATION

During 1949 heavier types of aircraft were in use mainly because of the increased activities of the British South American Airways Corporation which had transferred its Caribbean base to Oakes' Airport during the previous year. Pan American Airways operated Convair aircraft and Trans-Canada Airlines DC-4M aircraft constantly throughout the year. Owing to the increase of traffic and the faster type of aircraft employed the control of air traffic became more complex and the control staff of the Department was increased to meet the demand.

During the year work was begun on the aerodrome at West End, Grand Bahama, to specifications recommended by the Department in conjunction with the Air Ministry Meteorological Section, and towards the end of the year a seaplane ramp to enable amphibious aircraft to taxi ashore was also completed with advice from the Department. Butlins (Bahamas) Limited decided during 1949 that a two-runway aerodrome should be constructed and decided to begin work on the runway of 5,400 feet abutting the seaplane ramp to accommodate aircraft of the DC-4 category.

Towards the end of the year control staff was further increased, and three additional control officers were employed and their training commenced with a view to seconding them to the Grand Bahama Airport, where control and despatching of aircraft must be co-ordinated with the Air Traffic Control Centre at Oakes' Airport.

In December, 1949, a new Bahamian company called Skyways Limited was formed, which owns a Grumman Widgeon purchased from Nassau Aviation Limited. At the end of 1949 the following aviation companies were registered in the Colony : Bahamas Airways, with a fleet of one PBY5A, two Grumman Goose, one Seabee and two DC-3s (these two aircraft had been purchased but were not registered in the Colony at 31st December, 1949) ; Nassau Aviation Limited with one Grumman Goose and one Stearman ; Skyways Limited with one Grumman Widgeon ; Caribbean International Airways with two PBY5As (one of these two aircraft being registered in the Colony of the Bahamas and the other in Jamaica).

At 31st December, 1949, there were nine aircraft registered in the Colony of the Bahamas, and there were 10 current Bahamas " B " pilots' licences and six Bahamas " A " pilots' licences.

Air traffic in 1949 showed a big increase over 1948 and there were 6,619 aircraft movements at Oakes' Airport. The main companies operating into Oakes' Airport were British South American Airways, Pan American Airways, Trans-Canada Airlines, Bahamas Airways, Nassau Aviation, British Caribbean Airways and Flota Aerea Mercante Argentina. The total number of passengers arriving in the Colony by air during 1949 was 27,202.

Airport revenue for the year 1949 was :

	£	s.	d.
Landing fees . . . .	11,155	1	0
Parking fees . . . .	911	3	0
Hangar fees . . . .	2,588	3	1
Refuelling services . . . .	2,226	6	3
Rental of office and storage space, etc. . . . .	3,575	11	11
Miscellaneous . . . .	540	4	11
Total . . . . .	£20,996	10	2

## POSTS

Revenue derived from the sale of stamps during 1949 was £86,822 compared with £107,167 in 1948. The very high revenue in 1948 was due to the fact that two sets of commemorative stamps were issued by the Colony during the year ; one in commemoration of the tercentenary of the landing at Eleuthera of the Eleutherian Adventurers, and the other in commemoration of Their Majesties' Silver Wedding.

Four stamps, the 2½d., 3d., 6d. and 1s. values, were issued on 10th October, 1949, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Universal Postal Union.

During the year inter-insular mail services were greatly improved, owing to the inauguration of weekly services by motor vessels between Nassau and the majority of the Out Islands.

Air mails were despatched weekly to four of the larger settlements in the Eleuthera district.

Surface mails were forwarded to Miami twice weekly during the period January-April. Owing to lack of transport the mail service was reduced to one despatch per week from May to December. Mails were also forwarded direct to New York and Kingston, Jamaica, as opportunity offered. There was also an occasional despatch direct to Great Britain.

Air mails were despatched to Miami twice daily from Mondays to Thursdays and once daily on Fridays and Saturdays. In addition, air mails were forwarded to Great Britain, Bermuda and Jamaica bi-weekly. The service to Jamaica was increased during October to four despatches per week.

## TELEPHONES

Exchange equipment for 400 telephone subscribers in the city area was installed during 1949, and a percentage of the applicants were connected by the end of the year. The number of applications for telephone service increased greatly during the year and exceeded 400 ; and consideration will now have to be given to placing an order for another extension.

The equipment to extend the Western Exchange was received during the last quarter of 1949 and this will be installed early in 1950. Equipment to extend the Eastern Exchange by 100 lines is promised for delivery in April, 1950. Cables, underground and overhead, to meet the expansion were installed during the year.

#### RADIO-TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH

Several new radio telephone and telegraph installations were set up in the Out Islands, connecting these islands with Nassau, and the consequent increase in traffic necessitated the opening of another radio telephone and radio telegraph circuit between Nassau and the islands.

The opening of a Butlin's Vacation Village at West End, Grand Bahama, about 120 miles from Nassau, necessitated the installation of radio telegraph and telephone circuits between West End and Nassau and West End and Miami. This work was started in September, 1949.

## PART III

### Chapter 1: Geography and Climate

#### GEOGRAPHY

THE Bahamas are an archipelago of islands, cays and rocks, lying between  $20^{\circ} 50'$  and  $27^{\circ} 25'$  north latitude and  $72^{\circ} 37'$  and  $80^{\circ} 32'$  west longitude, and extending from Inagua on the south to Matanilla Reef on the North, from Mayaguana and its adjacent rocks and cays on the east to and including the Cay Sal Bank on the west, and are separated from Florida, to the west, by the Straits of Florida, and from Cuba, to the south by the Old Bahama and Nicholas channels. Extending over an area of 760 miles, the Bahamas comprise nearly 700 islands and more than 2,000 cays and rocks. The aggregate land surface of the group is  $4,375\frac{1}{4}$  square miles, which is slightly less than that of Jamaica, the largest of the British West Indian islands.

New Providence, although not one of the larger islands, is the most important, as it contains the capital, Nassau, which is the chief port and is inhabited by more than one-quarter of the total population of the Colony. The island is about 21 miles in length from east to west, and 7 miles in breadth from north to south.

The population of the Bahamas taken from the last census (1943) set out in individual islands, is as follows :

Abaco and Cays	3,461
Acklins Island	1,744
Andros Island	6,718
Berry Islands	403
Biminis	718
Cat Island	3,870
Cay Lobos	7
Crooked Island	1,078
Eleuthera	6,430
Exuma and Cays	3,784
Grand Bahama	2,333
Harbour Island	769
Inagua	890
Long Cay	101
Long Island	4,564
Mayaguana	591
New Providence	29,391
Ragged Island and Cays	417
Rum Cay	219
San Salvador (or Watlings Island)	693
Spanish Wells	665

## CLIMATE

The winter climate of the Bahamas is most delightful. Frost is unknown, the average temperature is about 70°F., the rainfall is slight, and cool breezes prevail. The rainy months are May, June, September and October. The total rainfall for 1947 was 51.67 inches and for 1948 was 43.49 inches.

The greatest heat is experienced during July, August and September, the temperature ranging from 80° to 90°F. The islands are never unhealthy and the malaria mosquito is unknown in the Colony.

## Chapter 2: History

At the time when the Bahamas were first discovered, that is to say in 1492, they were inhabited by a race of Indians who were removed to Haiti by the Spaniards to work in the mines. A few stone implements are occasionally found, but, apart from this, there is no trace of the aboriginal inhabitants. The Spaniards made no attempt to colonise the islands, which remained uninhabited until about 1629, when they were included in a Royal Grant, from which date they were visited from time to time by settlers from Bermuda. Earlier than that, in 1578, they were already regarded as part of the British domains. In 1647 a Company of "Eleutherian Adventurers" was formed in London for the purpose of colonising the islands, which were granted by Parliament to the Company despite the earlier Royal Grant. In 1670 yet a third grant was made by Charles II, vesting the islands in six Lords Proprietors.

Two years after the grant of the third charter the first governor was appointed by the Lords Proprietors. He and his successors found it extremely difficult to cope with the buccaneers, who at this time were the virtual rulers of the country. In 1673 one governor was seized and deported to Jamaica; in 1690 another was deposed and imprisoned; and it seems that the only governors who escaped trouble were those who left the inhabitants to do as they pleased. In addition to internal troubles the governors appointed by the Lords Proprietors had to deal with invasion. In 1680 the Spaniards destroyed the settlement and carried off the governor to Cuba. In 1703 a combined force of French and Spaniards destroyed Nassau and carried off the negro slaves, most of the white inhabitants fleeing to Carolina. The new governor, who arrived in 1704, found New Providence totally uninhabited, and returned to England.

Within a few years, however, Nassau was re-established as the headquarters of the pirates in West Indian waters, and so great were the depredations of these pirates that the British Government found it necessary to send out a governor to control the Colony and drive the pirates from their stronghold. This governor, Captain Woodes Rogers, arrived in Nassau in 1718, and in December of that year eight of the leading pirates were executed and the others compelled

to give up their nefarious trade. A period of comparative quiet followed. In 1776, however, a fleet belonging to the rebellious American Colonies captured the town of Nassau and carried off the governor, but after a few days the place was evacuated. Five years later a Spanish force took possession of Nassau and left a garrison, but in 1783 the Spaniards were driven out by a British expedition.

The subsequent history of the Bahamas is comparatively uneventful. The final abolition of slavery in 1838 caused an economic and social change; the outbreak of civil war in the United States led to a period of considerable prosperity in the Colony, which, between the years 1861 and 1865, became a depot for vessels running the "blockade" imposed against the Confederate States.

### Chapter 3: Administration

The present constitution of the Bahamas is similar to those of the North American Colonies prior to the War of Independence. The Government is modelled upon that of England in the early days, the Governor representing the Sovereign, and the nominated Legislative Council and the elected House of Assembly representing respectively the Houses of Lords and Commons.

The "Eleutherian Adventurers", who came to the Bahamas from Bermuda after the Parliamentary grant of 1647, brought with them a conception of representative government already established in Bermuda, and the affairs of the infant settlement were managed by a Governor, a Council, and an elected Senate. The Charter of 1670 to the Lords Proprietors provided for an elected House of Assembly, and the constitution, much as it exists today, was finally settled in 1729, when the Crown assumed direct control of the Colony. The Bahamas enjoy representative, though not responsible, government. The Executive Government is in the hands of a Governor, appointed by the Crown, who has the power of veto, and is advised by an Executive Council. Various executive powers and the right to enact certain subsidiary legislation are vested by law in the Governor in Council.

The Legislative Council, consisting of nine members nominated by the Crown, was created as a separate Council by Royal Letters Patent in 1841.

The House of Assembly is composed of 29 members elected for 15 districts. The qualification for members is possession of real or personal property to the value of £200. A member must also be a male British subject who has attained the age of 21 years and have been ordinarily resident in the Colony for the preceding three years. The Out Islands seldom return a member of their own community, the 21 representatives being generally inhabitants of New Providence. The qualification for electors is ownership of land to the value of £5 or the occupation of houses of annual rental value of £2 8s. in New

Providence, or half that amount in the Out Islands. Women have no vote. The normal life of the House is seven years, but it may be dissolved at any time by the Governor, as occurred in June, 1928, and in May, 1935. No forms of local government exist.

## Chapter 4: Weights and Measures

By the Weights and Measures Act (Chapter 172) weights and measures are fixed at the standard of those used in England previous to the introduction of imperial weights and measures. Imperial weights and measures are used, however, in the collection of duties on imports.

## Chapter 5: Newspapers and Periodicals

The following newspapers are published in the Colony :

- The *Nassau Guardian*, published daily.
- The *Nassau Daily Tribune*, published daily.
- The *Voice*, published weekly.
- The *Herald*, published weekly.

No periodicals are published in the Colony.

## Chapter 6: Reading List

HART, MISS. *Letters from the Bahama Islands*, 1823-24. Edited by Richard Kent. London, Culmer, 1948.

MALCOLM, HARCOURT. *Historical Documents relating to the Bahama Islands*. Nassau, 1910.

MOSELEY, MARY. *Bahamas Hand Book*. Nassau, 1926.

RICHARDSON, J. HENRY. *Review of Bahamian Economic Conditions and Post-War Problems*. Nassau, 1944.

WAKEFIELD, A. J. *Report on Agricultural Development in the Bahamas*. Nassau, 1942.

*Bahamas : General Descriptive Report on the Bahama Islands ; in which is included the Annual Report for 1902*. Cd. 1985, 1904.

*Historic Forts of Nassau*. Nassau, 1932.

*Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into disturbances in the Bahamas which took place in June, 1942*. Nassau, 1942.

The following Government publications are available :

*Laws*. Revised Edition, Vols. 1 and 2. Annual volumes for years subsequent to 1928.

Single copies of Acts.

Rules, Regulations and Orders-in-Council.

*Blue Books*.

*Official Gazette*.

Departmental Reports.

*Census*, 1943.

*Law Finder : A Guide to Legislation in force in the Bahama Islands*.

*Printed in Great Britain under the authority of His Majesty's Stationery Office by Charles Birchall & Sons, Limited, Liverpool, 2.*



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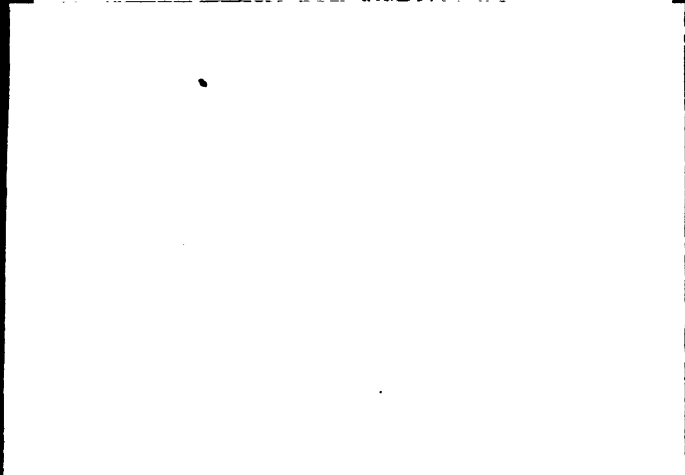
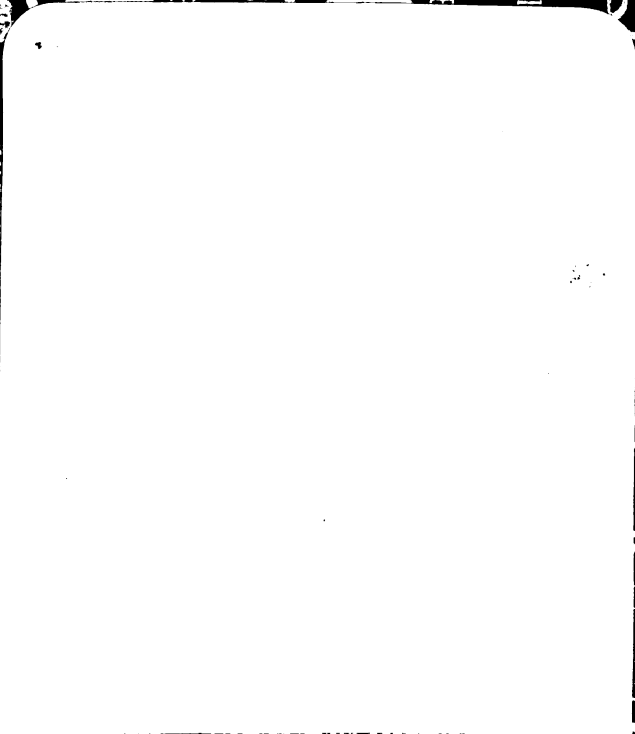
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